Week ending February 7 1953
Every Wednesday Fourpence

JOHN BULL

IF I WERE STALIN'S WAR CHIEF

by LIDDELL HART

Winston Graham's gripping new novel "Fortune is a Woman"

Whatever the pleasure
Player's complete it

Player's Please

[NCC 808T] PLAYER'S NAVY CUT CIGARETTES AND TOBACCO

You can't rear a child in cotton-wool

but for practical protection from sickness wise mothers find SevenSeaS cod liver oil a godsend. And at the same time SevenSeaS grows good sturdy bones and strong white teeth, as it lays the foundations for health that will last a lifetime.

SevenSeaS COD LIVER OIL

Sea-fresh, vitamin rich, daily SevenSeaS— golden liquid or handy capsules—builds up reserves of health and energy.

Every chemist sells SevenSeaS Cod Liver Oil from 1/6, capsules from 1/9.

Phensic

relieves HEADACHES

The combined, synergistic action of the analgesic ingredients in PHENSIC—Aspirin and Phenacetin, together with Caffeine, brings you three distinct benefits.

Phensic has a positive

3-fold action

RELIEVES PAIN PHENSIC tablets bring quick, safe relief from headaches and all nerve pains.

SOOTHES NERVES PHENSIC tablets soothe strained, overtired nerves, help you to sleep well and awake refreshed.

COUNTERACTS DEPRESSION PHENSIC tablets counteract the depression which so often accompanies pain.

PHENSIC tablets are invaluable for
HEADACHES, NEURALGIA, TOOTHACHE, NEURITIS, SCIATICA, LUMBAGO, RHEUMATIC ACHES AND PAINS

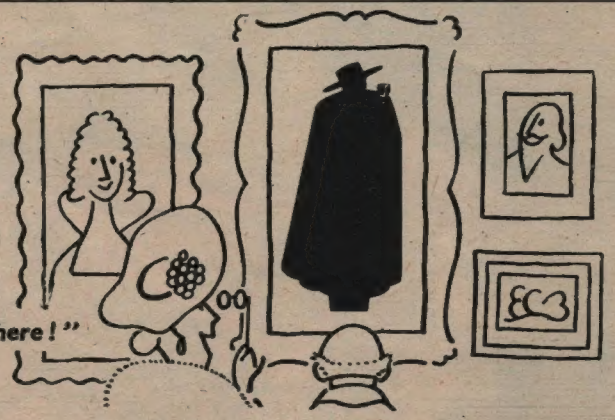
Be sure you ask for

In bottles 1/8 & 4/- and, for your handbag, convenient envelope packs containing two doses for 4d.

Phensic

It does not harm the heart—does not upset the stomach

BY APPOINTMENT
WINE MERCHANTS
TO THE LATE
KING GEORGE VI



"Look who's here!"

SANDEMAN PORT or SHERRY

"You'll like it"

RESULTS OF "FITTING PHRASES" CONTESTS Nos. 1, 2 and 3

John Bull, December 27, 1952

SECTION 1. Best entries were those bearing phrases allocated thus:

A 5, B 3, C 6, D 2, E 7, F 1, G 4.

For these entries the following 24 readers share the prize of £50:—

J. W. Bell, Bedford; D. W. Boucher, Swindon; J. Brough, Doncaster; Arnold Campbell, Glasgow C.5; J. Chadburn, Stapleford; A. Cheeny, Leicester; Miss Joan Hardman, Walton-le-Dale, Preston; J. Hepworth, Batley, Yorks; F. Johnson, Ipswich; A. E. Jones, Holyhead; Mrs. G. Leith, Aberdeenshire; A. McConachie, Glasgow; James W. Moult, Stockport; W. H. Ouseley, Eastcote, Mddx; N. Pritchard, Llanfairpwll; Miss D. Putman, Northampton; Arthur G. Roberts, Altrincham, Ches; G. Rowe, Skegness; Mrs. E. Rush, Mistley, Essex; A. M. Sarpter, Padworth, Berks; F. F. Stephens, Wyke Regis, Dorset; F. M. Sunley, Bridlington; Catherine Walsh, Edinburgh 3; T. F. J. Wilcox, London, N.11.

SECTION 2. Best entries were those bearing phrases allocated thus:

A 7, B 1, C 6, D 4, E 3, F 5, G 2.

For these entries the following 21 readers share the prize of £50:—

J. Atkins, West Bergholt, Essex; Miss M. Bottomley, Bradford, Yorks; E. Barrow, Huddersfield; G. Coates, Camberley; M. Drymeade, Dorchester; Mrs. W. Fraser, Drumnadroghit, Inverness; Miss M. Hunt, Cricklewood, N.W.2; Michael Kieltny, New Ross, Eire; W. R. Knight, Pershore; Catherine Parson, Scalby; R. A. Mallory, Newark, Notts; G. A. Matthew, Aberdeen; Norman C. Milwight, London, S.E.13; A. C. Mitchell, Grantham, Lincs; M. Playfair, Aberdeen; G. W. Prior (Jnr.), Edinburgh, 11; D. Quinlan, Leeds 2; Mrs. E. Radcliffe, Leyton, E.10; John J. Russell, Heanor; C. Whitelaw, Newcastle-on-Tyne 4; S. Williams, Plymouth.

SECTION 3. Best entries were those bearing phrases allocated thus:

A 1, B 6, C 5, D 3, E 2, F 7, G 4.

For these entries the following 23 readers share the prize of £50:—

H J. Bick, Bromley, Kent; N. L. Blackmore, Swindon; V. F. G. Butler, Southampton; Ellen Capps, New Costessey; A. D. Fox, Stafford; J. Gibbins, Bildworth; Henry L. Gill, Aberdeen; M. E. Green, Salisbury; E. E. Hallett, Grays, Essex; F. W. Hammond, Skipsea, E. Yorks; C. James, Aberdare, Glam; Mrs. E. Jones, Narberth, Pembs; W. M. Lavender, Ewell; Mrs. E. Nelson, Belfast, N.2; Mrs. E. Nuttall, Glasgow, S.4; A. Pye, Liverpool 6; Mrs. J. Sayers, Blackhill, Co. Durham; J. A. Smith, London, E.1; A. W. Stedman, Leighton Buzzard; J. D. Stubbins, Strelley, Notts; Mrs. M. Tattersall, Oswaldtwistle; A. G. Thyer, Eastleigh; Mrs. L. Tozer, Bridgwater.

All winners have been notified and cheques have been dispatched

EDITORIAL

Up the flue

WE are a nation of wasters—at least in the matter of coal. According to the Economic Commission for Europe, each person in Britain consumes ten billion calories of fuel each year, twice as much as the average Frenchman, Dutchman or Dane.

The main reason is our affectionate devotion to the open fire.

DR. J. BRONOWSKI, Director of the Central Research Establishment of the National Coal Board, says: "I am in no doubt that this country can hold its place among the leaders of world industry. But not by blowing seventeen hundredweights of the energy in every ton of coal up the flue.

"We talk grandly of harnessing the tides on the Severn at a cost of £100 million. But half that sum would modernize enough house and factory grates to save twenty million tons of coal a year."

DR. BRONOWSKI
An answer to "grand talk"

There is still a gaping shortage of coal, despite the 225 million tons mined in 1952. The price has risen since before the war from 52s. a ton to 120s. 5d. (in London) today.

At that price, one would have thought the housewife would use it in a really economical way.

But Lord Morrison recently claimed in the House of Lords that many people throw away half-used lumps of coal which still have as much as sixty per cent of good burning left.

Leeds Corporation extracts 6,000 tons a year from cinders and actually sells some back to the housewives at 15s. a ton. When mixed with pitch it fetches £4 5s.

"People are too apathetic to cinder-sift or else consider it too dirty a job," says an expert.

AT best, however, only twenty per cent of each lump of coal put on an open fire heats the room. The rest goes up the chimney. The use of a slow-combustion stove gives forty-five per cent room heat—which is two and a quarter times as much.

The housewife is not the only—or the worst—culprit. Industry can save on the grand scale. By fixing mechanical stokers and insulating roofs, a woollen factory saved sixty-eight tons of coal in four months and increased production by ten per cent.

WE want more and cheaper coal. It is up to the miner to dig it. But the current complaints about "lazy miners" cannot be justified when we all continue to burn away the nation's energy at the present rate.

THIS WEEK'S COVER

SINCE the war, square dancing has swept back into vogue. In Britain, two million people have taken it up. Abroad, the fiddle-scraping country rhythms are heard in such unlikely places as Tokyo and Berlin. Richard Shorter's painting conveys all the exuberance and sparkle of the dancing—yet he has seen it only twice. Born in Austria, Shorter studied art in Prague, Paris and Berlin. Before the war he emigrated to Australia.

Here's what Osram Lamps can boast Women ask for Osram most!

Osram

THE WONDERFUL LIGHT

A G.E.C. Product The General Electric Co. Ltd.

"Heirloom my eye-thats new"

SAID BILL

It was easy to make that mistake—it looked so bright and spotless. "This," I informed him, "was my grandmother's. It looks new because she cleaned it regularly with Duraglit." "What's that?" he asked. "It's a wadding polish," I said patiently. "It cleans any kind of metal. Leaves no deposit. Doesn't make a mess and lasts for ages." Why didn't I keep quiet! Next thing I knew he'd pinched my tin to clean his car!

. . . it's amazing what you can do with

dura-glit

METAL & SILVER POLISH

For Copper, Brass, etc, 11½d. and 1/9d. tin

For Silver and Chrome 1/4½d. tin

Famous for fine Quality

"Nell Gwyn" Regd.

The Marmalade with the delicious tenderised peel!

Serial No. 3754 BRITISH GOOD HOUSEKEEPING INSTITUTE GUARANTEES REFUND OF MONEY OR REPLACEMENT IF NOT IN CONFORMITY WITH THE INSTITUTE'S STANDARDS

and

FRESH FRUIT JAMS by Crosbie's

NO ADDED PRESERVATIVE OR COLOURING MATTER

It pays to buy

O.K

Britain's best

A little 'O.K' goes a very long way. Standard Size 1/6

THE SAUCE THAT DOES YOU GOOD

FREE SPEECH

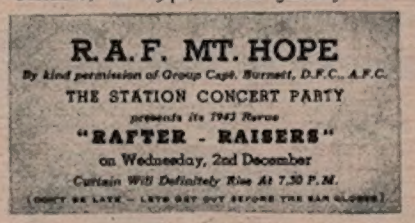
A home is not a hat-rack

WHY do some husbands think that their responsibility to their wives begins and ends with the passing over of the housekeeping money? My husband, once this is done, considers that his whole duty has been completed. Every Saturday morning, the busiest morning of the week with all the shopping to be done, he gets in the car and goes off to golf, his friends or his club. On weekday evenings he says he is too tired to go out, and I know that usually this is true.

Resentfully, I argue that he should pay more attention to the children and to me. He replies: "Well, dear, we see each other every day, and the children don't much mind whether they see me or not. You can call on your friends any day of the week, but the weekend is my only chance to see mine."—Mrs. W. M., Devon.

Laughing Years

THE extracts reproduced here are from the programme of a revue staged by P/O Jimmy Edwards, his brother, and his friends at Mount Hope, Ontario, in 1942, when Jimmy was



R.A.F. MT. HOPE

By kind permission of Group Capt. Burnett, D.F.C., A.F.C.

THE STATION CONCERT PARTY

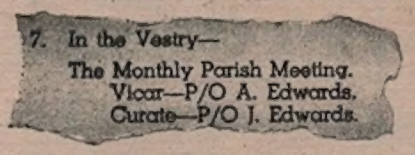
presents its 1943 Revue

"RAFTER - RAISERS"

on Wednesday, 2nd December

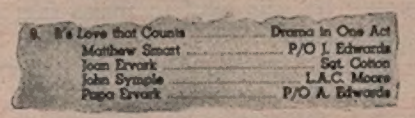
Curtain Will Definitely Rise At 7.30 P.M.

(DON'T BE LATE — LETS GET OUT BEFORE THE RAIN GLOOMS)



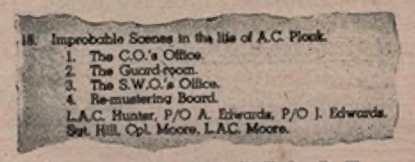
7. In the Vestry—

The Monthly Parish Meeting.
Vicar—P/O A. Edwards.
Curate—P/O J. Edwards.



9. It's Love that Counts — Drama in One Act

Matthew Smart	P/O J. Edwards
Joan Erwark	Sgt. Cotton
John Symple	L.A.C. Moore
Papa Erwark	P/O A. Edwards



18. Improbable Scenes in the life of A.C. Plonk.

1. The C.O.'s Office.
2. The Guard-room.
3. The S.W.O.'s Office.
4. Re-mustering Board.

L.A.C. Hunter, P/O A. Edwards, P/O J. Edwards.
Sgt. Hill, Cpl. Moore, L.A.C. Moore.

training to be a pilot ("Take It From Me," John Bull, January 24). The show was much enjoyed by all personnel.—Frederick Reed (ex-L.A.C., R.A.F.), Cimla, Neath, Glam.

. . . Jimmy Edwards's story of his organ-playing days at college (John Bull, January 3) recalls my own battles with that instrument. Many years ago, when I was seventeen, I played the organ at our church. For the visit of a young bachelor minister from America, I wore my new hobble skirt. During the third hymn, "Fight The Good Fight," I opened out, used the knee swells, pedalled violently, and was reaching over to pull out a stop when, with a mighty ripping noise, my skirt split twelve inches. The minister preached on "The Day of Judgment," but his eyes constantly wandered to the intricate pattern of my princess petticoat. Later, the young minister called on me but I twice refused to see him. When we did meet I had deliberately plastered my hair with Vaseline, put on dark glasses and a prim navy dress. To the great disgust of my girl friends, he returned to America still a bachelor.—Mrs. H. E. M., Bath.

. . . Jimmy Edwards was in the team that flew re-supply aircraft on the Arnhem operation. I escaped from the encirclement and later watched the R.A.F.'s daily attempts to supply the ground troops, despite intense A.A. fire. Their terrific efforts were worthy of the highest praise.—Jack Hewitt (ex-1st Airborne Div. Signals), Manuel Street, Goole, Yorks.

"I Crash In Flames Over Arnhem," the fifth part of "Take It From Me" by Jimmy Edwards, starts on page 16.

DOWN YOUR GARDEN

with RICHARD DIMBLEBY

Begins in John Bull next week

See page 22

At Your Service

THE shortage of telephones, criticized in your editorial "Hold The Line" (John Bull, January 10), has its lighter side. A friend of mine notified the G.P.O. that she no longer required her telephone. Months passed. Then an engineer came and replaced the phone with a new one. Some time later another man came to test it. The telephone is still there.—A. K., Ossett, Yorks.

Too Much Colour

I THINK that Don Everitt was perhaps over-eager to find touches of colour in his article about my work (John Bull, January 17). This has led him to describe my hat as a bonnet—which I don't wear; and my perfectly straightforward voice as "a Liverpool twang"—which I have never had. He has also got my salary wrong.—Mrs. B. Blyth, Liverpool Vigilance Association.

Ears Unhearing

EVENING service was over, and while our minister bid his congregation good night, his two little boys seized the chance to try out the church's deaf aid system. Not knowing that I had switched the current off, the younger boy spoke into the pulpit microphone, while his brother sat in a pew wearing a deaf aid. "Speak louder," he kept urging, and then gave up in disgust, saying, "I can't hear a thing." His brother, stepping down from the pulpit, gave him a contemptuous look. "Of course you can't," he said. "You're not deaf."—W. J., Birmingham.

Nature's Cure

IN the retreat from Mons in August, 1914, a bullet or a piece of shrapnel divided the lobe of my right ear. The field bandage proved useless and no doctor was available. An old soldier advised me to use cobwebs ("Free Speech," January 17). I gathered a large, dirty handful from a barn. They stopped the flow of blood, and the flesh healed cleanly.—W. H. H. Allin, Norwich, Norfolk.

. . . Belief in the use of cobwebs for cuts must have been prevalent in Shakespeare's day. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Bottom the weaver, on making the acquaintance of the fairy, Cobweb, says, "If I cut my finger I shall make bold with you."—Miss Jean Bailey, Godfrey Road, Skircoat Green, Halifax, Yorkshire.

A doctor pointed out in "Free Speech" the danger of infection if cobwebs are used to stanch bleeding.

Dinner Saved

TWO men were sent to my house by the electricity authority to exchange my electric cooker. I had gone out, leaving a pudding steaming on the hotplate. When I returned the new cooker was in position, with the pudding cooking on top. The men had obtained my key from a neighbour, removed the pudding to her cooker while installing the new one, replaced the pudding and left, without disturbing my husband, who was asleep after night duty.—Mrs. J. Aylmer, Carlyle Walk, Lincoln.

Apples Best?

DOCTORS advocate fresh air for their patients. In a residential district near my home there is a long street where several doctors live. Even on the warmest day I have never seen one of their windows open.—Mrs. D. M., Aberdeen.

Gaelic Esperanto

THE letter from J. C., of Preston ("Free Speech," January 17) on the English language recalls a shopping trip I made with a Scots shipmate on an island in the Azores. As his accent was *very* broad we agreed that I should do the talking. I knew English only, and failed to make the shopkeeper understand. We were about to leave empty-handed when I turned to my friend and said, "You have a go. He might understand your foreign lingo." Jock said to him, "Can ye no understand it's sugar we're wanting?" The shopkeeper's expression changed from exasperation to joyous understanding. "*Si, si*" he cried, and produced all the sugar we wanted.—M. P. Jon, Bristol.

. . . In parts of Worcestershire a dead end or cul-de-sac is called a stocking street.—Mrs. K. Marks, Ford, Lochgilphead, Argyll.

Long Laces

WHENEVER I buy shoes or plimsolls for my four-year-old son, I notice that they always have full-length laces. If I cut a piece off the ends I lose the metal tag. If I don't, I have to tie immense bows which

almost touch the ground. Shoe-shop managers tell me that their firms do not make shorter laces for children's shoes. Why not? They would save thousands of yards of cotton a year, and the shorter laces should be cheaper to the customer.—John Archer, Ruffetts Close, Croydon.

Letters intended for publication should be as brief as possible and include the sender's full name and address. John Bull pays a guinea for every letter printed. Readers with personal problems should send inquiries (other than medical) to John Bull Free Advice Service with a stamped addressed envelope for reply.

Both these men are 35!

Strong hair, growing strongly. An asset too readily taken for granted. Why has he been so favoured?

This man's hair has always been thin and brittle. And he has always been sensitive about it. Can anything be done?

People so often guess a man's age by his hair

WHY SHOULDN'T WE PUT THINGS BLUNTLY. Thinning hair puts 10 years on a man's age—and is taken to be a sign of failing powers. Grossly unfair? Yes. A first impression. But an impression that too often remains. And understandably; for a fine head of hair is a sign of admirable self-respect; and all the more so because the health of your hair is no longer entirely a matter of chance, it is much more a matter of science. Nowadays there is less and less excuse for unhealthy hair.

NEW, LIVING HAIR

The hair that you see in your mirror is dead—no more living than the tips of your fingernails. But, on a healthy scalp, every hair is constantly being replaced by new, living hair, growing outwards from the true growing point of the hair known as the 'papilla' or hair root.

Because hair grows, hair must be fed. When you think of it, that is obvious enough. To the papilla, a tiny blood vessel brings the material necessary for building hair, and keeping it in good health. If this nourishment fails, the hair will fall out *and will not grow again!* But what is the hair's food, and where does it come from?

Drawing based on a photomicrograph clearly showing the hair 'root' which must receive regular nourishment if the hair is to grow.

WHAT MAKES HAIR GROW?

Here is the most up-to-date picture. Hair, like a large part of all living matter, is formed from protein. What is protein? It is an organic substance made up of small units called amino-acids.

New hair consists of a special kind of protein called *Keratin*. And *Keratin*, in its turn, is built from as many as 18 different amino-acids. Your hair roots must receive a constant supply of *all* these amino-acids, if your hair is to grow and be healthy.

Under perfect conditions your body supplies these hair-forming substances. But if you are not in perfect health (and who is?) then these substances may be in short supply. And your hair begins to suffer. Many people, of course, never *have* had enough hair-forming substances. They suffer from a 'natural' shortage. In both these circumstances the scientific treatment is to supply extra amino-acids *from outside the body*. This can be done by massaging into the scalp the substance called Silvikrin. What is Silvikrin?

THE SECRET OF SILVIKRIN

A few drops of Silvikrin contain the building units of millions of healthy hair cells. For Silvikrin contains in an active state all the substances of which hair is formed: tryptophane, lysine, histidine, phenylalanine, leucine, isoleucine, methionine, valine, threonine, arginine, cystine, tyrosine, proline, serine, aspartic acid, glutamic acid, glycine and alanine. Massaged into the scalp, these substances directly nourish the hair roots. That is why Silvikrin is the hair's natural food.

You can buy Silvikrin in the exact form to meet your particular need: a concentrated solution for thinning hair and severe dandruff is known as Pure Silvikrin. There is also Silvikrin Hair Tonic Lotion for daily massage, and Silvikrin Lotion with Oil—the modern form of tonic dressing.

Silvikrin Laboratories also manufacture shampoos which are an essential part of the Silvikrin method of hair care.

The full, often startling benefit of Silvikrin cannot be achieved in a few days or even weeks. For Silvikrin is a scientific, bio-chemical treatment which aims at a *fundamental* improvement in your hair health. Silvikrin products, used regularly, improve the texture, appearance and health of your hair.

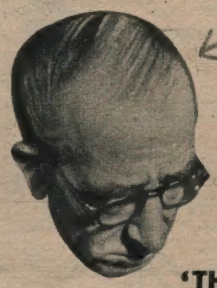
When you need Silvikrin

DANDRUFF

Shampoo your hair weekly with a *Silvikrin shampoo*. Massage the scalp, for at least two minutes night and morning, with *Silvikrin Lotion with Oil*. In severe cases use *Pure Silvikrin*.

OILY SCALP

Keep your scalp *really* clean with a *Silvikrin shampoo*. Massage for two minutes night and morning with *Silvikrin Hair Tonic Lotion*.



THINNING HAIR

Apply *Pure Silvikrin* night and morning, with the addition of a little *Silvikrin Lotion with Oil* if the hair is dry, or *Silvikrin Hair Tonic Lotion* if the scalp is rather too oily.

'The Book of the Hair'

This is the title of a new, authoritative treatise just published by Silvikrin. In its 36 pages you will find all you want to know about the growth and care of your hair. Send 7½d. in stamps to Silvikrin Laboratories Ltd. (Dept. J.B.2), County Building, Honeypot Lane, Stanmore, Middlesex.

Pure Silvikrin **12/6.** Silvikrin Lotion with Oil and Silvikrin Hair Tonic Lotion both **2/9** and **4/10.** Silvifix Hair Cream **4/6.** Silvikrin Shampoos: Powder **8d.** Liquid **1/6.** Cream **1/6** and **2/4**

SP.18

IT'S GOT 24 Hours Start! - THAT *Cold*

A COLD WITHOUT A CLUE—a cold can be with you for 24 hours without giving you a clue that you've got it. For it's a fact that the cold virus is in the nose all that time before you feel anything.

Pick up that lost time as quickly as possible—take two 'ASPRO' tablets at the very first signs and feel its combined antipyretic (fever-reducing), analgesic (relieving aches and pains) and sedative action stopping those symptoms straightaway.

TO STOP IT YOU NEED SPEED YOU NEED 'ASPRO'

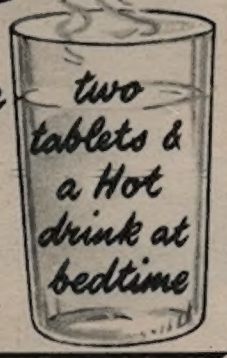
Just take

'ASPRO' DOES NOT HARM THE HEART OR STOMACH

SOLD EVERYWHERE

5D. (1 tape) 1/9 (carton)

MADE BY ASPRO LTD., SLOUGH, BUCKS



Over 6 million ASPRO tablets taken daily

RUB IN

ELLIMAN'S

RUB OUT PAIN

Massage with Elliman's Embrocation quickly relieves rheumatic pain and eases stiff, sore, aching muscles. Even as you rub its tingling warming effect penetrates right deep down to the affected parts and grateful comfort starts to replace the pain of

RHEUMATISM, LUMBAGO, SCIATICA, FIBROSITIS, STIFF, SORE MUSCLES.

All over the world and for over 100 years Elliman's has been the trusted family friend in need—you rub IN Elliman's, you rub OUT Pain.

1/10 and 2/10 per bottle.

HE WAS OUR SON but he lived next door!

Bob was never at home. Always spent his evenings with the Mitchells next door.

When his father asked him why . . . "They're always so jolly", he said.

"Maybe it's our fault: maybe we're getting too dull. Let's ask them all round here."

GOSH! THIS IS FUN MUM!
WHAT'S THIS WONDERFUL DRINK MRS. KEEBLE?
CADBURY'S DRINKING CHOCOLATE
LET'S MAKE THIS A REGULAR WEEKLY CHOCOLATE PARTY

I knew they'd love Cadbury's. That's the way to bring them home; a party—and Cadbury's Drinking Chocolate to round it off. It's the finest party drink there is. Hot, rich, sweet and frothy. AND IT'S SO EASY TO MAKE!

Cadbury's

DRINKING CHOCOLATE

(Note to wise housewives: always keep a tin in the store-cupboard!) 1 4d. A HALF POUND TIN.

If tickling throat won't let you sleep
I know a plan that's sound and cheap

HOARSE? GO-SUCK A

ZUBE

8½d. and 1/4 tins, 5½d. an oz. loose

MY CHILD?

NEVER!

It's nobody's fault: any child, unfortunately, can pick up head lice. There is no need to reproach yourself or worry about it. One application of SULEO HAIR EMULSION will clear the most heavily infested head. *Rapid in action—harmless to hair and scalp—non-irritant—undetectable after use.* Guaranteed completely non-inflammable.

SULEO the SAFE remedy

Obtainable from all Chemists 2/2 a bottle

IT'S A JEYES PRODUCT

HOOVER & ELECTROLUX *etc*

£6'15'- (REBUILT)

no purchase tax!

Limited quantity of these famous cleaners fully guaranteed by S.E.P. Ltd.

Post today!

S.E.P. LTD., 4 EDEN STREET, KINGSTON-ON-THAMES
IBI/53 Phone: Kingston 3317
Please send me details of Rebuilt vacuum cleaners without obligation
NAME .....
ADDRESS .....
.....
Use 1½d. stamp on unsealed envelope

BRANCHES IN MOST PRINCIPAL TOWNS

Fortune is a Woman

by ***WINSTON GRAHAM***

ILLUSTRATED BY GEORGE DITTON

This fire was no accident: the evidence was damning. Groping about in the blazing house, I tried to tell myself that Sarah had nothing to do with it

WHEN TRACEY MORETON introduced me to his wife as Major Oliver Branwell, she didn't recognize me at first. There was no reason why she should. The last time Sarah had seen me I was a bearded hobo who'd mended a puncture for her a few months before the war.

War's a crucible, and the army did a lot for me. I no longer felt like a misfit down on his luck. I'd made one or two good friends, among them Michael Abercrombie, who got me a job in his father's firm of insurance adjusters when I was demobbed.

I'd been working at it about two and a half years when I was sent down to Lowis Manor, in Kent, to investigate a fire.

The owner, Tracey Moreton, collected pictures, and one of them, a valuable Birket Foster water colour, had been destroyed. It was called "Mill and Spinney."

Tracey had had a rough time in the war, and it hadn't done his asthma any good. The asthma seemed to be hereditary—his mother suffered from it in summer. Old Mrs. Moreton told me a lot about the family. I gathered that they weren't too well off now, and had difficulty in keeping up the house.

The people I later met at the Moretons'—Clive Fisher, the art connoisseur, his sister Ambrosine, and the rest of them—weren't really my sort. But they were friendly to me, and I would probably have seen a lot more of them but for one thing. I'd fallen in love with Sarah.

One night, I took her to the ballet. Over dinner she was vivacious and full of questions about my work, and I remember that we laughed when I outlined the best way to start a bogus fire.

Perhaps it was the wine, but later on I lost control: I kissed her and said, "You know I love you, don't you?" "Yes," she said quietly. "I shouldn't have come, Oliver." It couldn't go farther than that. Tracey trusted her, and she wouldn't think of breaking that trust.

A few days later, while on another case, I got a shock. I went to see an American, Bill Croft. On the wall of his flat was Birket Foster's "Mill and Spinney"—and it was genuine.

Had Tracey made a false claim on my company? Appalling suspicions rushed into my mind. I asked Croft where he had got the picture. He said he'd bought it from a very attractive young woman. She was thirtyish, tall, dark, with deep hazel eyes. He couldn't have described Sarah better if he'd tried. . . .

PART 2

Sarah Under Suspicion

I DROVE back to the garage, and parked the car; but then instead of going home, I walked through Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens. I suppose I must have walked four or five

I switched on my torch, then stood perfectly still. The hair rose at the back of my neck. The thing I had stepped on was a man's hand

miles. I got in about eleven and went up and switched on the light and looked round. It all looked just the same: the faded green carpet and the two green plush easy chairs; the gas fire with a bit chipped out of one tier; some magazines and books I'd been reading which had been piled carelessly and had spilled on the floor; a half-empty packet of cigarettes half open on the sham antique writing desk.

I sat on the divan and lit a cigarette and then went into the kitchen and fished out a bottle of whisky.

I thought: take it quietly; there are degrees of enormity; insurance companies are fair game. Is that what it is? Is that *all* it is?

I sat for a long time, until Big Ben sounded faintly on somebody's radio nearby. Then I got up, pulled back the coverlet of the divan, undressed and got into bed. I didn't sleep. About three I got up again and lit the fire and sat by it in my pyjamas, chain-smoking.

After a bit I must have dozed off in the chair, because when I woke it was getting light and outside there was the first murmur of the morning traffic.

Because of the fire claim, I knew who the brokers were through whom Tracey insured his property. A man called Fred McDonald was their claims manager. As it happened, I'd rather been at loggerheads with him once or twice over insurance matters, and I think he disliked me; but I made an excuse to call in and see him about a fire claim on a Southampton wharf. As I was leaving I said: "Oh, I suppose you still handle Tracey Moreton's business, do you? D'you know if he's increased the insurance on Lowis Manor recently?"

McDonald rubbed his second chin with a fat thumb. "Moreton? Isn't he—oh, I remember. There was a small claim on it, wasn't there, a year or so ago. I think he has. Why d'you ask?"

"It's not important, but when I saw him a few months ago I told him I thought he wasn't covered on present-day prices."

McDonald pressed a bell. "Yes. . . . when the policies came up for renewal—about last October. I'm not sure of the exact terms. Can soon let you know if you like."

I made noises not quite strong enough to discourage him, and when his typist came back with the file he said rather unamiably: "Contents cover he increased from £25,000 to £30,000. I suggested that he increased the cover on the house, but he didn't seem to think that necessary."

With a feeling of sudden relief I said: "What is it? I don't remember offhand."

"Twelve thousand. I've never been down, but it's quite a gem, I understand."

"Yes. . . . If I see him again I'll suggest that he brings it up by fifty per cent."

"All right. Goodbye, Branwell."

I WENT out of the office into the shadow and sun of Gracechurch Street. So suspicion had got out of hand. It wasn't as bad as the bogies of the early hours had whispered. All the same, there was enough to be going on with.

When I got to my office, I picked up the phone and asked the girl to get me Sladen 35. Sarah answered the phone. When she knew who it was, her voice seemed to change. Perhaps it was my fancy.

"I thought I'd ring," I said. "How are you?"

"I'm fine, thank you."

"And Tracey?"

"Not awfully well."

"I'd like to see you again some time pretty soon. I—want to see you both. Would it be convenient if I came down tomorrow?"

There was a pause. "We're just getting ready to go away. We leave on Saturday morning, you know."

"Oh. . . . I'd forgotten. . . . What about tomorrow evening?"

There was a sound of muffled conversation, then Sarah's voice came over the line once more. "We're only going for a week," she said. "Is it urgent?"

Was it urgent? "No," I said. "I suppose not. Will you phone me as soon as you get back?"

"Of course." Her voice was very guarded today.

"There's one thing I wanted to ask Tracey," I said. "Where is it he has his pictures cleaned—the Constable and the Lippi, for instance? I was talking to an American last night. I said I'd get the name."

I heard her ask Tracey and heard Tracey say: "What does he want to know for?" and Sarah's explanation. Then she said: "It's Barber and Curry. They're in Bond Street, half-way up on the right-hand side, Tracey says."

"Right. Thank you. Enjoy your holiday. Goodbye. . . ."

"Goodbye."

I heard the click at the other end, and I could almost see her, sitting for a moment, uncertain and uneasy. Then I replaced the receiver myself.

It was nearly lunch time and I'd done nothing useful all morning. I sat thinking for about ten minutes, then pulled a sheet of the firm's notepaper towards me and wrote:

"Messrs. Griggs Agency, Private and Confidential. Dear Sirs, We would consider it a favour if you would give us information as to the business record, if any, and financial stability of Mr. Tracey Moreton, of Lowis Manor, Sladen, Kent. Yours faithfully, for and on behalf of Abercrombie & Co.—O. Branwell."

I wrote out the envelope and sealed it and put it in the post tray, and then I went out. I caught a No. 23 bus and dropped off at the top of Bond Street and walked down. Barber and Curry is one of those shops which show a solitary discreet old master on an easel in the corner of their window with a tapestry curtain for a background.

THE manager was at lunch, but another man in a white coat seemed to know everything, so I said I'd called about a picture I wanted restored. He said vaguely, oh, yes, what was the picture. I said, an early Foster, but first could he possibly give me some idea of the work they had carried out for Mr. Tracey Moreton of Lowis Manor, who had recommended me, and the cost of the work to him.

The man in the white coat said: "What name was it? And what were the pictures?"

"T. Moreton," I said. "A Constable and a Lippi. Possibly a Watteau as well."

"I don't remember them personally, but I'll check that up."

He went away, and then came back to say that the only client he could trace was a Viscountess Morecambe. *What* was the year? Last year, I told him, knowing now all I could know but having to make a tactful exit.

So in five minutes he was back again, with a wooden face this time, as if he suspected there was a confidence trick in it somewhere, but couldn't quite see where. They'd done no work for Mr. Moreton—nor had they handled a Lippi in recent years. If I would care to wait until the manager came back . . . I said no, I'd see Mr. Moreton before going further, and a minute later I found myself out on the pavement again.

Outside the shop, I decided on the spur of the moment to go and see Henry Dane. Apart from the Abercrombies, Henry Dane was perhaps the best friend I'd made in the insurance world. He was really a solicitor who specialized in insurance business and had made a terrific name for himself as an investigator.

In the first place we had met as rivals; that was often the way; but we soon grew to respect and like each other. He was a queer chap, a rough diamond at heart, and perhaps that was a link; a man who looked forty-five and was ten years older; a man who went at everything with his teeth set, whether it was a job of work or a game of golf.

I went to see him and told him what I knew

The man stared in at the car window. "What's

and what I suspected. I gave no names, so that he couldn't have any idea whom I was really talking of.

I ended by saying: "It seems to *me* to be an insurance fraud, but I've no real proof of it yet; and so far it's a very modest one. In any case there are reasons at present why I don't want to come out into the open. I thought if anyone could advise me . . . nobody's had more experience than you. . . ."

While I was talking he had been sitting on the window sill and filling his pipe, cramming down the tobacco with the cap end of a .303 bullet that he always carried.

"Man in any sort of financial trouble?"

"It's hard to find out. I'm getting Griggs Agency to report on him. He's always lived as a private gentleman. He was badly hit by death duties a few years ago."

"Wife in the fraud, d'you think?"

". . . Yes."

"Mother?"

"No, I'm almost certain not."

"Can you lay your hands on this first picture?"

"Yes. But I don't think it would be possible

amiss up at the Manor?" he shouted. Pretending not to hear, I started the engine and drove off

to prove that the artist didn't paint two pictures of the same scene. I'm told it was done sometimes."

Dane rubbed his forefinger along his furrowed cheek. "Then you may be mistaken about the fraud."

"No. . . . There are other things."

"You assessed the damage after the first fire?"

"Yes."

"And you think they're planning to do the same sort of thing again?"

"Sooner or later. I'm pretty certain of it."

"And that they've made a friend of you. . . ."

"Yes, to make things easier for them when the time comes. I remember the man, only the second or third time we met, asking who chose the adjuster to be employed on a case. In fact we've often talked about insurance, and I've told him what I knew. The wife as well. . . ."

"These other pictures. . . ."

"That's what I was wondering about. This next week I could lay my hands on them, more or less at leisure. D'you know any way of telling an old master from a cheap copy—any, so to speak, general rules?"

He blew out a smoky breath. "Some fakes are so good that they cheat the experts. . . . You say you could get to them?"

"Yes."

After a bit he said: "The man you should see is Lewison. He's got a little shop in the West End, not far from you. What he doesn't know about fake pictures nobody knows. Lewison served two terms in prison before the war, but it's all forgiven and forgotten now. He was a great help to me in the Killarney case. But you'd better mention my name or you won't get a word out of him. And you'll have to *pay*. He doesn't talk for nothing."

"I'll pay," I said. Whatever it was, it would be cheap.

No tactful arrangement of a solitary oil painting adorned the window of Mr. Lewison's place. It was cluttered up with bric-à-brac and pictures, some flashy, some nondescript. And when you got inside, you realized that all the best stuff was in the window. It was the shop of a man who never said no to a reasonable proposition, whether a pianola or a jemmy. I wondered who insured him.

A tall chap with a cast in one eye and a stoop came out from behind a Jacobean bookcase and sniffed suspiciously as if he thought I'd brought in a bad smell.

"Mr. Lewison?"

He didn't answer for a minute but turned back for his glasses. When he'd got them fixed, he stared at me through the thick part of the bi-focals and said: "Who is it wants him?"

"Mr. Henry Dane, the solicitor, sent me. He thought Mr. Lewison could help me, give me some advice. I'm an insurance investigator."

He tried the smell of that, and didn't altogether like it. "I'm Lewison. I am not an informer."

"I'm not asking you to be. It's some advice on two pictures that I want—how I might be able to detect whether they are genuine."

He stared at me and fiddled with his glasses. "What are the pictures?"

"Two oil paintings. A Constable and a Lippi."

"Lippi never painted in oils. Where are the paintings?"

"I can't produce them. It's some general advice I want."

"General advice is useless. There is only one way of coming to detect whether a painting is a fake or genuine; and that is by studying a thousand pictures—in great detail. Then, in a few years perhaps, one gets a feeling. Rule of thumb methods can only help sometimes—if the copy is a poor one."

"I should be prepared to pay," I said.

He frowned and hummed and hawed. Then he said: "Ah well, yes, come inside. This is going to take time."

WHEN I got back to my flat it was well after six. I knew exactly what I was going to do. There was no point in getting there before dusk; and although Tracey and Sarah would probably have left in the morning, the old servants might potter about for hours afterwards. It might be that a caretaker would be left in the house, in which case my journey would be wasted.

It was a windy evening, with a good lot of cloud and a few patches of coldish blue sky. I got my car off the fourth floor of the garage, and drove slowly down Park Lane and Grosvenor Place to Victoria, along Victoria Street and across Westminster Bridge to St. George's Road and the roundabout at the Elephant and Castle. I didn't hurry.

My mind was full of stuff about age-cracks and varnishes, and the mess of canvases and manufacturer's marks, and whether the stretcher was glued or tacked, and if the priming varied. My mind was full of that, but I didn't think about it. I thought about Sarah. I thought about our last meeting. "There are reasons," she had said, when I asked her why she came out with me.

I took the main road for Rochester, and at Dartford turned sharp south along the valley of the Darenth, through Farningham and Sevenoaks. I hadn't been that way before. As the light began to fade, I saw that there was a three-quarter moon rising among the clouds.

About a couple of miles away from the house, I stopped for a smoke. In spite of the clouds it wasn't dark. I wasn't too happy about the gatehouse. Sarah had told me it was empty; normally they let it, but the man had died and the new people hadn't come in yet. But that was some time ago. I didn't want to spend the night in jail.

I threw the cigarette end out of the car and started up. I was still able to drive on sidelights, and I went past the gatehouse. It was in darkness.

I parked a couple of hundred yards beyond, on a grass verge under some trees, and switched off the lights and got out.

I didn't go back that way, but shinned over the wall into Tracey's property.

There was no light showing at the back of the

Sarah rang off and sat there for a moment, uncertain and uneasy; that was how I pictured her

gatehouse either, so I walked up the drive, keeping well in to the holly trees.

Lowis Manor was unlit, as I'd expected but there was one obvious thing to do as a precaution. I walked straight up to the front door and pulled the bell. If Elliott, the butler, was still here, or some caretaker, it would be easy to fake a story.

It looked a big place in the half dark, silent and squat. I rang again. It was one of the old type bells, not electric, and you could picture the bell wagging and tinkling in the very depths of the house, in the kitchen where nobody stirred now.

I stepped on a flower bed and tried to peer in at the window of the hall, but it was too dark inside. A circuit of the house first just as a further precaution.

I STARTED off anti-clockwise, meaning to take in the stables last. But I never even got as far as the kitchens. On the south-east side of the house, just past the big Irish yew tree, were the bow windows of the dining-room. The gravel path ran close to the house here and almost level with the windows. Sarah had told me once that this was because the ground had risen through the centuries. I was just going to peer in, when I saw that the last window was ajar.

If anything would have amused me in the mood I was in, that would have. Probably old Elliott had slipped up. Or perhaps Tracey himself had left it open in the hope that there *would* be a burglary.

The latch was on the first hole. There was just room for me to put my knife in and knock it up. Then I put a leg through on to the window seat and stepped into the room. It was as easy as that.

I brushed the window seat to take off any dirt, and then flicked my torch about for a second or two. The room was unfamiliar in dust-sheets. The fine Chippendale table—which might also be only an imitation—had something lumpy on it. In the corner behind the screen was the door leading to the kitchen. Perhaps Elliott hadn't gone, but had fallen asleep in his chair.

I went into the hall.

I didn't want to use my torch much at the front of the house; and, in any case, just when I opened the door the moon was full out. It all looked most odd. The decorators were still very much in charge here, and had left two pairs of step-ladders standing up in the middle of the floor with a plank between. The furniture was draped in white and stood in unfamiliar places, and there was a great pile of dust-sheets near the foot of the stairs.

The moon went behind a cloud, and the room suddenly frowned at me. The wind was buffeting against the house, and I thought for a minute I heard a footstep on the stairs. I peered up through the new darkness but there was nothing there. A noise, though: *tap-tap . . . tap-tap-tap* somewhere upstairs. You couldn't expect a house of this age to be silent in a half gale.

I set my mind to business. First the pictures. That was what I'd come for. Proof. Take them down, into some room with heavy curtains and a north window.

The old stairs only creaked once as I went quietly up them. And then I saw that the pictures were not there.

I stared at the blank spaces, feeling thoroughly annoyed and frustrated, as if the things had been hidden away specially to thwart me. Then I realized that no one in their right senses left pictures up when the decorators were in.

As I came down the stairs again, I thought I could see a promising shape covered with a dust-sheet beside the door leading to the old hall; and when I went across I found it was in fact the two pictures I wanted.

I'd never seen them at close quarters before; they were bigger, heavier than I thought. The faces of the Magi in the Lippi were almost life-size. In the shaded light of the torch they seemed to be half alive; you could fancy the contorted features ready to move, ready to break into a whisper.

What had Lewison said? Wooden panel, coated with glue size. All sorts of details that I couldn't follow; gesso . . . yolk of egg and water . . green earth. . . .

I leaned the picture over on its face and fished out my penknife. I stuck the blade into the back of the panel. It went in. I put the knife away and picked up the pictures, one in each hand.

The moon was still behind the clouds, but my eyes were getting more used to the dark, and it was reasonably possible to move about without bumping into things. I made for the living-room, avoiding the ladder on the way, and was almost at the door when I stepped on something. It was like a thick piece of rubber and I kicked it but it didn't move far.

I put one picture down and took out my torch and switched it on. The thing I'd stepped on was a man's hand. I jerked the torch back and it caught the edge of the picture frame and slipped out of my hand. As it hit the floor it went out.

FOR one appalling moment I stood perfectly still, the hair rising at the back of my neck. Then I leaned the pictures shakily against a table and trod across the hall towards the switch by the door, not caring now who knew I was here.

I got to the switch and fumbled with it. No result. The light had been turned off at the main board.

I stood there against the door, trying to fight down my rising panic. And then the moon came out brilliantly, and with the light behind me I could see it all, the white peaks of the furniture, the piled dust-sheets, the ladders, the two pictures leaning, and the lumpy shadow of the man just in front of the door of the living-room. It was all motionless, waiting for me. I felt gutless and weak.

I went back.

He was lying on his side with one arm flung out. His face was in the shadow but I thought I knew the clothes. There were two or three bits of wood on the floor around him. I picked up the torch but the bulb was smashed. After a minute I pulled the man over. It was Tracey Moreton.

His eyes stared past me, over my shoulder, as if he was looking at someone there. Only he wasn't looking. He seemed thinner and smaller than usual. I couldn't tell how long he'd been dead.

I pawed over him for a minute and then

Continued on page 26

If war comes, what will the Red Army do? What are its aims? And its fears? Here are the answers to these vital questions of today

IF I WERE STALIN'S WAR CHIEF

by Captain B. H. LIDDELL HART

IN CONFRONTING the problem that Russia presents today we are labouring under several handicaps that are heavier than any in our past experience. One is the combination of immense material resources with a fanatical spirit and faith. Their dynamism is dynamite in the world today.

Another handicap is the inscrutable nature of the Russian mind, and the difficulty for Westerners of penetrating into its thought processes. The Russians' difference from their European neighbours has been multiplied by Marxist indoctrination and by isolation.

A third handicap is lack of reliable information about the situation inside Russia, militarily and politically. Even in 1942-45, when we were her partner in the fight against Hitler, we were far more in the dark about her forces than about the German. While we knew where almost every panzer or infantry division lay, and where they moved, we had only a dim idea of the number of divisions in any Russian army! It is even dimmer today.

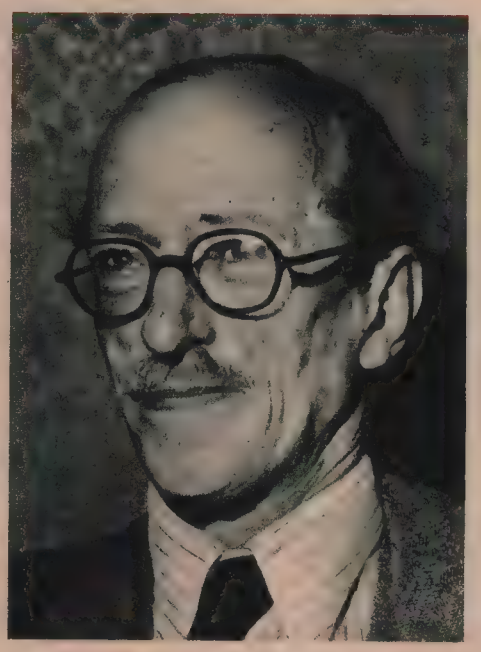
The Allied statesmen and military chiefs have often stated that Russia has 175 divisions in her standing army. Such a figure sounds impressively precise, but is little better than a guess.

It is possible to get a fairly accurate picture of her forces in the occupied and satellite countries, but not of those which lie farther back, deep inside Russia. Not only is her security network extremely tight, but her vast space aids concealment. The Iron Curtain is a flimsy screen compared with such depth. Our information today about Russia is in many ways hazier than ever, and where it is specific is more dubious.

Red Marshals' Viewpoint

So, in trying to gauge her leaders' likely moves, the best guide may be to place ourselves imaginatively in their seats and look at the situation strategically from their point of view. Strategy is a practical matter, and less doctrinaire than political theory, while also less influenced by racial modes of thought. Although the military profession has been the strongest servant of nationalism it has an international way of thinking in the approach to problems.

If I were the Chief of the Russian General Staff I should feel much satisfaction with my "hands of cards" on the military level, and with my government's on the higher level. I would not like to exchange these hands for those which Russia's Western opponents have to play, on either level. But I should advise Stalin against risking war in a major way unless



LIDDELL HART, the world's most famous military writer

"In the first place, Russia must make sure that she can annihilate Britain quickly"

sure of solving one problem, and seeing a good chance of solving another.

In the first place, I would emphasize, Russia must make sure that she can annihilate Britain quickly—not so much because of Britain's own power, but because of her key position, just off the continent of Europe, as a base for American counter-attack, particularly with atomic bombs.

Secondly, we must be able to see a good chance, and an effective way, of paralysing counter-action by the U.S.A. for a lengthy period. It will not be enough, I should say, to overrun Europe and sweep the Americans out of it, unless we can ensure ample time for them to cool down, in a state of impotence, and come to the conclusion that there is more to lose than to gain by a prolonged and destructive effort to recover their hold on Europe.

Having made these two fundamental points, I should amplify them. As Chief of the Russian General Staff, and an objective-minded strategist, I should not be deluded by the Communist Party's postwar propagandist line that Britain had played a negligible part in Hitler's defeat. It would be clear to me that Hitler's first and most fatal mistake was that he had not thought out, nor been prepared for, the problem of conquering Britain after overrunning the Continent.

Because he could not cross the English Channel—a super-scale anti-tank ditch that baulked his otherwise decisive panzer forces—he had been impelled to turn east while still entangled in the west, and to strike at Russia without being able to concentrate his full strength for the blow. Thereby he had forfeited the tremendous advantage he enjoyed after the fall of France. Moreover, by failing to subdue Britain, this "island on the edge of the Continent" became both the base of America's bombing forces and the springboard for the liberating invasion of Europe. I should not overlook this lesson in my own planning.

"Jumping" The Channel

Ever since the second World War ended in 1945, I would say, I've had the General Staff at work on the problem of how to knock out Britain. Indeed, this study began even earlier. For as soon as it appeared that Roosevelt and Churchill were really trying to smash Germany completely, and leave her no forces to act as a defensive barrier, it became obvious that they were opening the way for us in western and southern Europe. How blind they were! So we naturally started to look for a solution of the "British island" problem.

We Russians early came to the conclusion that we ought to create the largest possible airborne forces with a view to "jumping" over the Channel, and over the heads of the British fleet —as our navy is even less likely than Hitler's to gain command of the sea. In the second World War, we had more trained parachutists than any other country, yet we lacked adequate air transport to use them effectively. Since Germany's collapse, we have been building up proper airborne divisions, and an air transport fleet, as well as long-range fighters.

Of course, I realize that a large airborne force is very vulnerable, and difficult to carry through to its objective in face of even a moderately strong air defence. But I would point out to Stalin that there are several cards we can play. The first is to launch our airborne force against England by surprise before war has broken out, so that we can catch the British when they are

CONTINUED OVERLEAF

"Now there is much less chance of our being able to achieve local advances anywhere without producing a general war." Here is the map of the world, as it looks when viewed from Russia

not mobilized. A weekend would be a good time—they are normally off their guard then, and it would be much easier to produce a paralysing upset. This airborne stroke would be immediately followed by a general advance of our armies in Europe, so that each blow would help the other, and give the enemy all the less chance to recover his balance.

We were a bit worried last year when the British showed signs of awakening to the danger of a surprise descent from the sky, and began to revive their wartime Home Guard as a precaution—but the British newspapers show that recruiting for this citizen force has been a flop, and I don't think most of their people are taking the danger seriously.

The British are naturally inclined to look on such an operation from their own point of view, and to be governed by their own habit of mind. Their military leaders were usually very cautious in the last war, and particularly careful about ensuring ample supplies. So they probably think that no one would drop a large force at a distance, and into an island, where its maintenance would be precarious.

Facing A "Suicide" Task

The British and Americans don't realize that our Russian troops are accustomed to live on very little and carry on for weeks at a time without the supplies that a western army deems essential—foraging for themselves in the country where they are fighting. Nor can our enemies really understand that we can be quite ruthless in sacrifice, and that our men don't jib at being sacrificed in "suicide" operations. Even if we were to lose one or two airborne corps in such a descent on England, that would be a fleabite compared with what we lost in our opening battles against the Germans. We don't mind big initial losses when playing for big stakes.

Another way of landing a force in England by surprise, and before we had won command of the sea and sky, would be through an undersea invasion — in submarine troop-carriers. We've been working on that problem. But it calls for a very big development, which takes time and carries various complications. In the light of the navy's limited experience and performance in war compared with the army, I'm not very confident of it having the skill and drive to carry through such a project. So an airborne raid seems the better bet, at any rate in the immediate future.

However, Stalin may decide against it. He has never been inclined to strike unless very sure of success. The kind of audacious gamble that Hitler loved has never appealed to him. Moreover, its best chance would lie in launching it as a complete surprise when the British are not mobilized—but that would obviously put the onus of aggression on us. For political and psychological reasons, it may be wise to ring up the curtain with a land battle on the Continent, where we can more easily make it appear that our offensive is a retort to an enemy violation of frontiers. Stalin does not think only of "strategy," but rather of "grand strategy"—the higher plane where political and military action are combined.

An Eye On The Rhine

If Stalin turns down this out-of-the-blue stroke against England, there are several other opening uses for our airborne forces in closer combination with a land attack.

One is to drop them beside the Rhine bridges —in order to capture these intact for the passage of our armies, while cutting off the Allied forces stationed east of the Rhine and blocking the move-up of Allied reinforcements. Another is to drop them on Denmark and the south coast of Norway—to capture the outlets from the Baltic for the passage of our submarines.

We might also drop them on the Alpine passes leading from Austria into Italy, or—farther afield—on the passes in Persian Azerbaijan leading into the plains of Iraq. These last two strokes would call for relatively small forces, so we might be able to execute them without seriously diminishing the strength required for either of the big strokes. The total of our ground forces, too, is much larger than we can effectively employ in Western Europe, so we could well provide sufficient divisions to follow up the airborne "tin-openers" into Italy and the Middle East. The more widely we develop our threats, the more confusion and demoralization we shall cause.

If it becomes a matter of choosing between the Rhine crossings and Baltic outlets, I would be inclined to the latter—for it is so important to get our submarines out in full force into the Atlantic to block the ocean supply routes from America to Europe, and especially to England.

I'm not counting too much, however, on such a submarine blockade proving decisive—as Hitler and Admiral Doenitz hoped theirs might be. Although in 1945 we captured the latest German submarine designs, which have been a great asset, that is not the same as having a submarine force equal in skill and experience to the German. There's a lot of leeway to make up among the personnel.

In any case, we must solve the problem of knocking out America's advanced base in Britain, and of doing it at an early stage of the war. How could it be done? Once we have overrun the western part of the Continent, and occupied the coast, the Russian Air Force should have a very big superiority over the British and American air strength remaining in the south of England, and we may be able to dominate the Channel sufficiently to push across an invading army. It was only by a narrow margin that Hitler failed to win the 1940 Battle of Britain in the air—and he was not prepared for the problem he tackled. He had not even got the armoured landing craft required to carry his assault troops, whereas we've had plenty of time to build them in quantity.

Atom—Or Germ—Attack

If we don't succeed in gaining sufficient mastery of the Channel to get our invading army across in overwhelming strength, there are other cards we should be able to play. One is an atomic bombardment—delivered by our air force or by the guided missiles that we are now developing. Another is a bacteriological bombardment—Britain being an island, there is less risk to us that this might become a boomerang.

In view of our great advantage in strength for the normal kind of land offensive, we might keep these cards up our sleeve until America plays hers. For there is sure to be much protest, from her allies in Europe, who are closer targets, against her starting to atomize cities if we at first refrain. There is a risk in refraining, but the profit could be greater. So it's a question of launching the bombardment of England after reaching the Belgian and French coast, or of launching it earlier at longer range—as we can do with our new strategic bomber force.

It is vital to us in any war that Britain should be quickly eliminated. The surest way would be to make it uninhabitable—turning it into a desert island. That would also be simpler than trying to convert its people to Communism. We can occupy and repopulate it at leisure, if we choose to do so—though there is much to be said for keeping it merely as a military outpost on the Atlantic coast, occupied purely by a Russian garrison.

It's All Or Nothing

Now that America has taken Southern Europe and the Middle East under her wing, as well as Western Europe, we have got to reckon that there is much less chance of our being able to achieve local advances anywhere without producing a general war. So if it comes to military action we can no longer contemplate limited objectives—it's all or nothing. That makes it the more necessary on our part to aim at the annihilation of Britain, and to give it priority in our planning.

If Britain can be annihilated, we shall not have much left in Europe to worry us. The French are still very poorly equipped, thanks to delay in American production and the inefficiency of their own—and that's not likely to raise their morale above the 1940 level. The West Germans are still unarmed, and even if the wrangling over their rearmament ends, it will be at least two years before their proposed contribution of twelve divisions is ready.

Now that we've mechanized a large part of

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Continent-bound motorists drive their cars in through the nose of Powell's freighters. Minutes later, they drive out again—on to a French road

Griffith Powell's tourist airlift

by KEITH ELLIS

Think of a need, he says. Lay on the service, then go out and sell it. That's his way of getting holidaymakers into the air

ON THE LAST DAY of 1951, a small family car drove up a curved ramp and through the gaping nose-doors of a fat, bug-like plane which squatted on the tarmac of Lympne Airport in Kent. Its occupants, George Hinchliffe and James Bullman, had set out from Marble Arch in London at half past six that morning in an attempt to break the land speed record to the Cape. Planning to clip every possible second off the time set up two years before by Jopling and Sleigh, they made, not for Dover, where their predecessors had boarded a steamer, but for Lympne. They were going to fly the Channel.

The sixty-seven miles from Marble Arch had taken them an hour and a half. At 8.29 a.m. the plane took off, and twenty-two minutes later it landed at Le Touquet. Hinchliffe and Bullman had covered their first 114 miles in two hours, twenty-one minutes. Within minutes, they were off again. They arrived in Capetown twenty-two days later, breaking the record by two days, five hours and five minutes.

"The air ferry takes twenty minutes instead of two hours by sea," says Air Commodore Griffith Powell, managing director of Silver City Airways, which operates the service. "And it eliminates long waits at each end in Customs queues." Hinchliffe's trip was not a special charter but part of a scheduled service. His car was the last of 13,000 vehicles to be flown across the Channel in 1951.

Even among motorists who have no wish to break records, the idea of flying the Channel is steadily growing more popular. In 1948, 170 vehicles used the air bridge; in 1952, Silver City looked forward to a large increase on the 1951 record of 13,000, and opened an additional route from Southampton to Cherbourg. But the reduction of the foreign travel allowance to £25 cut tourist traffic by almost one-eighth.

The loss, however, has been more than made good by the motor export trade. One group of manufacturers, whose Paris showrooms were too small to carry a large stock of cars, was unable to give firm delivery dates for new car orders. It now uses air transport and advertises a twenty-four-hour service—"any body, any colour." More ambitiously, Silver City recently flew from Lympne to Dusseldorf two cars ordered by American army officers. They were the first ever to be delivered on the spot to customers waiting on an airport tarmac.

Powell sees the air-bridge as the culmination of his seven years in air freighting. He is a tough-minded businessman with a jovial, buccaneering manner and bounding optimism. "We're not trying to compete with the big corporations," he says. "We have a common interest—to get people into the air."

His way of getting people into the air is to find a need, lay on a service and sell it to potential buyers. He discovered that trans-atlantic liners carry up to a hundred cars, but on the eastbound journey they stop at Cherbourg long enough to discharge only a few. Most of the passengers who disembark have to wait several days for their cars to be ferried across the Channel from Southampton and driven back to Cherbourg. Powell now advertises in New York that his Southampton—Cherbourg ferry can fly the cars back in thirty-four minutes.

He also found that soft Normandy cheeses deteriorate so rapidly in transit that shop-keepers in the north of Britain consider them a bad buying risk when carried by surface

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He could not sit and watch his mother die. Even if he was shot for it, he had to get her . . .

A drink of water

by SAMUEL SELVON

ILLUSTRATED BY PAUL RAINER

THE TIME WHEN the rains didn't come for three months and the sun was a yellow furnace in the sky was known as the Great Drought in Trinidad. It happened when everyone was expecting the sky to burst open with rain to fill the dry streams and water the parched earth.

But each day was the same; the sun rose early in a blue sky, and all day long the farmers lifted their eyes, wondering what had happened to Parjanya, the rain god. They rested on their hoes and forks and wrung perspiration from their clothes, seeing no hope in labour, terrified by the thought that if no rain fell soon they would lose their crops and livestock and face starvation and death.

In the tiny village of Las Lomas, out in his vegetable garden, Manko licked dry lips and passed a wet sleeve over his dripping face. Somewhere in the field a cow mooed mournfully, sniffing around for a bit of green in the cracked earth. The field was a desolation of drought. The trees were naked and barks peeled off trunks as if they were diseased. When the wind blew, it was heavy and unrelieving, as if the heat had taken all the spirit out of it. But Manko still opened his shirt and turned his chest to it when it passed.

He was a big man, grown brown and burnt from years of working on the land. His arms were bent and he had a crouching position even when he stood upright. When he laughed he showed more tobacco stain than teeth.

But Manko had not laughed for a long time. Bush fires had swept Las Lomas and left the garden plots charred and smoking. Cattle were dropping dead in the heat. There was scarcely any water in the village; the river was dry with scummy mud. But with patience one could collect a bucket of water. Boiled, with a little sugar to make it drinkable, it had to do.

SOMETIMES, when the children knew that someone had gone to the river for water, they hung about in the village main road waiting with bottles and calabash shells, and they fell upon the water-carrier as soon as he hove in sight.

"Boil de water first before drinking!" was the warning cry. But even so two children were dead and many more were on the sick list, their parents too poor to seek medical aid in the city twenty miles away.

Manko sat in the shade of a mango tree and tried to look on the bright side of things. Such a dry season meant that the land would be good for corn seeds when the rains came. He and his wife Rannie had been working hard and saving money with the hope of sending Sunny, their son, to college in the city.

Rannie told Manko: "We poor, and we ain't have no education, but is all right, we go get

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Standing in the rain, Sunny saw the tin cup fall from his mother's hands, and heard his father's cry of alarm. "Water," she moaned

For a moment the boy stopped, listening. Then he began clambering over the fence to the well

old soon and dead, and what we have to tink 'bout is de boy. We must let him have plenty learning and come a big man in Trinidad."

And Manko, proud of his son, used to boast in the evening, when the villagers got together to talk and smoke, that one day Sunny would be a lawyer or a doctor.

But optimism was difficult now. His livestock was dying out, and the market was glutted with yams. He had a great pile in the yard which he could not sell.

Manko took a look at his plot of land and shook his head. There was no sense in working any more today. He took his cutlass and hoe and calabash shell which had a string so he could hold it dangling. He shook it, and realized with burning in his throat that it was empty, though he had left a few mouthfuls in it. He was a fool; he should have known that the heat would dry it up if he took it out in the garden with him. He licked his lips and, shouldering the tools, walked slowly down the winding path which led to his hut.

Rannie was cooking in the open fireplace in the yard. Sunny was sitting under the *poui* tree, but when he saw his father he ran towards him and held the calabash shell eagerly. Always when Manko returned from the fields he brought back a little water for his son. But this time he could only shake his head.

"Who went for water today by de river?" he asked Rannie.

"I tink was Jagroop," she answered, stirring the pot with a large wooden spoon, "but he ain't coming back till late."

She covered the pot and turned to him. "Tomorrow we going to make offering for rain," she said.

NEXT day, Las Lomas held a big feast, and prayers were said to the rain god, Parjanya. And then two days later, a man called Rampersad struck water in a well he had been digging for weeks. It was the miracle they had been praying for. That day everyone drank their fill, and Rampersad allowed each villager a bucket of water, and Manko told Sunny: "See how blessing doesn't only come from up in de sky, it does come from de earth, too."

Rampersad's wife was a selfish and crafty woman, and while the villagers were filling their buckets she stood by the doorway of their hut and watched them. That night she told her husband he was a fool to let them have the water for nothing.

"Dey have money hide up," she urged him. "Dey could well pay for it. De best thing to do is to put barb' wire all round de well, and set a watchdog to keep guard in de night so nobody tief de water. Den say you too poor to give away for nothing. Charge a dollar for a bucket and two shillings for half-bucket. We make plenty money and come rich."

When Rampersad announced this, the villagers were silent and aghast that a man could think of such a scheme when the whole village was burning away in the drought, and two children had died.

Rampersad bought a shotgun and said he would shoot anyone he found trespassing on his property. He put up the barbed wire and left a ferocious watchdog near the well at nights.

As April went, there was still no sign in the sky. In Las Lomas, the villagers exhausted their savings in buying Rampersad's water to keep alive.

Manko got up one morning and looked in the tin under his bed in which he kept his money. There was enough for just two buckets of water. He said to Rannie: "How long could you make two buckets of water last, if we use it only for drinking?"

"Dat is all de money remaining?" Rannie looked at him with fear.

He nodded and looked outside where the *poui* tree had begun to blossom. "Is a long time now," he said softly, "a long time, too long. It can't last. De rain will fall, just don't be impatient."

Rannie was not impatient, but thirst made her careless. It happened soon after the two buckets were empty. She forgot to boil a pan of river water, and only after she had drunk a cupful did she realize her fatal mistake. She was afraid to tell Manko; she kept silent about the incident.

Next day, she could not get out of bed. She rolled and tossed as fever ravaged her body.

Manko's eyes were wide with fright when he saw the signs of fever. Sunny, who had not been to school for weeks, wanted to do whatever he could, anything at all, to get his mother well so she could talk and laugh and cook again.

He spoke to his father after Rannie had fallen into a fitful sleep, with perspiration soaking through the thin white sheet.

"No money remaining for water, *bap*?"

Manko shook his head.

"And no money for doctor or medicine?"

He shook his head again.

"But how it is dis man Rampersad have so much water and we ain't have any? Why don't we just go and take it?"

"De water belong to Rampersad," Manko said. "Is his own, and if he choose to sell it, is his business. We can't just go and take, dat would be tiefing. You must never tief from another man, Sunny. Dat is a big, big, sin. No matter wat happen."

"But is not a fair ting," the boy protested, digging his hands into the brittle soil. "If we had clean water, we could get *mai* better, not so?"

"Yes, *beta*," Manko sighed and rose to his feet. "You stay and mind *mai*, I going to try and get some river water."

ALL day, Sunny sat in the hut brooding over the matter, trying hard to understand why his mother should die from lack of water when a well was filled in another man's yard.

It was late in the evening when Manko returned. As he had expected, the river was nearly dry, a foul trickle of mud not worth drinking. He found the boy quiet and moody. After a while, Sunny went out.

Manko was glad to be alone. He didn't want Sunny to see him leaving the hut later in the night, with the bucket and the rope. It would be difficult to explain that he was stealing Rampersad's water only because it was a matter of life or death.

He waited impatiently for Rannie to fall asleep. It seemed she would never close her eyes. She just turned and twisted restlessly, and once she looked at him and asked if rain had fallen, and he put his rough hand on her hot forehead and said softly no, but that he had seen a sign that evening, a great black cloud low down in the east.

Then suddenly her fever rose again, and she was delirious. This time he could not understand what she said. She was moaning in a queer, strangled way.

It was midnight before she fell into a kind of swoon, a red flush on her face. Manko knew what he must do now. He stood looking at her, torn between the fear of leaving her and the desperate plan that he had made. She might

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SAMUEL SELVON, author of *A Drink Of Water*, is a young Trinidad Indian whose quality of writing has already earned him high praise. Of his first novel, *A Brighter Sun*, which was published last year, the critics said: "One of the most delicate and touching things I have read for a long time" . . . "Mr. Selvon writes vividly and poetically" . . . "obviously a natural artist."

Selvon . . . vivid, poetic

Born in Trinidad thirty years ago, Selvon began work in the oilfields and did not start writing seriously until after the war. At that time, as a journalist in the island's capital, Port of Spain, he was sending his short stories to the B.B.C.—and getting them broadcast.

In 1950, he came to England, bringing with him the manuscript of *A Brighter Sun*. He took it to a publisher in London. It was immediately accepted.

Now, living in a London flat with his wife and one-year-old daughter, he works as a clerk with the Indian Civil Service. In the evenings he gets down to the job nearest his heart—his second novel.

TAKE IT FROM ME (5) *Jimmy Edwards describes his exciting adventures on the most valiant airborne assault of the war*

I crash in flames over Arnhem

BACK IN BRITAIN after two years in Canada training to be a pilot, I was sent straight to Harrogate, but a couple of days later I was able to get leave. I hurried to London carrying gifts: lengths of suiting material for my mother and sisters, razor blades and braces with real elastic in them for male friends and relatives.

I found my mother still busy at the air raid warden's post, and saw very little of her. I went to some shows, invited myself to a few parties, and was glad to find that these two years away had in no way impaired my taste or capacity for English beer. I returned to Harrogate and expected to stay there for many months. I was mistaken. Soon after I was posted to Limavady, Northern Ireland. It was now June, 1943.

Nobody at Harrogate knew what type of aircraft was used at Limavady, a Coastal Command station. The adjutant said he thought they might be Catalinas. That sounded as though I might get my wish and find myself on long-range anti-submarine reconnaissance. When I reached Limavady, however, I was in for a nasty shock, for I saw nothing but several rather clapped-out Wellingtons flying around the sky. I asked our airman driver what they were used for. "Them?" he said, pointing up. "Why, them's training on night torpedo dropping." My heart sank. I felt sure then that I was due for one of the shakier do's of Coastal Command.

I found no difficulty in coping with the new aeroplane. "Edwards, you're a born Wellington pilot," my instructor told me after my first landing. This was a doubtful compliment. In the Wellington, it was necessary to manhandle the controls like a lorry driver.

The time came to be "crewed up." As I was the last pilot to join the course, I was told to go into the navigators' classroom and see if there was anyone there who had not yet found a captain. When I put the question, only one hand went up. A very north-country voice said: "I've not."

"Well, you've got one now," I said, and shook hands with Harry Green. "Do you know anyone for wireless operator?" I asked. In this particular course, we carried three wireless operator-air gunners, and he handed me the names of three of his chums on a scrap of paper. I told him to bring them round to meet me as soon as possible. They were Sergeants Randall, Smith and Cartwright.

Randall seemed very young, even for the Air Force. He was short, had ginger hair and freckles. When we met for the first time, he asked: "Is your name Edwards, sir?"

"Yes," I replied.

"Do you live in Barnes?"

"Yes, I do."

"Near the White Hart Lane?".

"That's right," I said, puzzled.

"Well," Randall grinned, "my aunt used to be your nursemaid."

Billy Randall (right) served in Jimmy's aircrew throughout the Arnhem operations, and is now his dresser. In the wings of the Adelphi, he hands Jimmy his trombone ready to go on stage

It Was A Small World

It was true. A few days later he produced, for the amusement of the rest of the crew, a photograph which his mother had sent him. It showed their new pilot as a babe in arms! Billy Randall had been born a few hundred yards from our house in Barnes and, in his early youth, had been a boy on the greengrocer's cart which delivered goods to our door. He knew my family almost as well as I did. It was, I decided, indeed a small world.

The sixth member of the crew, my second pilot, was allotted to me soon afterwards. He was F/O. MacNeill, a Canadian from Halifax, Nova Scotia. We managed to get through the course, all six of us, and, as a fully fledged crew, we were sent to Scotland for a month's training in torpedo dropping.

At last we were ready for active service. Our first job was to ferry a brand-new Wellington to North Africa. There we hoped to join a squadron and get cracking straight away. We spent a few days testing the aircraft in flight and, when we were satisfied, flew to Hurn, near Bournemouth. From there we were to hop off across the Bay of Biscay. Take-off was scheduled for midnight, but bad weather caused a postponement and we all drove from the station into the town for a celebration. The same thing happened next day, and again the day after. We began to think we would never get away to Africa.

The following evening we were told that the take-off was once more to be postponed. Fortunately for me, while my crew continued their

Jimmy's aircrew. Left to right, back row: Jimmy, Sgt. Cartwright, F/O. MacNeill. Front row: Sergeants Billy Randall, Harry Green and Bill Shaw

programme of partying in Bournemouth, for some reason I went to bed early that night. Just before midnight, the crew, all slightly merry, came in to wake me up. "The weather has cleared," MacNeill told me. "We're to get airborne at once."

All dressed in their best blue and quite unprepared for flying, the boys climbed into the aircraft. We taxied out towards the runway and waited our turn for take-off with the twenty or thirty aircraft which were going to Africa with us. Soon we were in the air. It was pitch dark as we flew inland down to the Scillies. There I turned to Harry Green. "What's the course to Rabat Sale?" I asked, and he gave it to me. We droned over the inky sea at about two thousand feet. After a while, the rear gunner called excitedly through the inter-com. "Aircraft on the port bow, skipper!"

Trained Guns On Star

I shouted to Billy Randall: "Get into the front turret." There was a bright light in the sky. I ordered that all guns should be trained on the light, which we took to be an aeroplane. Presently, to our relief, we realized that we were looking at a star. We still had a great deal to learn!

At dawn, Harry Green came up to peer hopefully over my shoulder. "That's funny," he said, puzzled. "Nothing in sight but water."

My heart sank. "You mean you're lost?"

"I'm not exactly lost, skipper," Harry said. "Alter course five degrees to port and you'll soon hit Portugal."

I did so, and presently land came into view. As I turned to fly parallel with the coast, we ran into a heavy rainstorm. Having sampled Harry's navigation, I decided to hug the coast, which seemed to be swinging steadily eastwards. I looked at my compass and suddenly realized we were flying due east. "We must be going straight up the mouth of the Tagus," I said, horror-stricken, and put the aircraft into a steep turn to starboard. From then on we stayed a respectful distance from the coast. We had narrowly escaped being interned in Portugal for the rest of the war.

At Rabat Sale we were told to fly on to Setif, which we did. We landed on the dusty strip and taxied in, hoping against hope that there would be a squadron stationed there to which we would be attached. I was greeted by an L.A.C. in dirty khaki shorts. He waved us in and we parked with hundreds of other black-painted Wellingtons. It was a terrible anti-climax. "Right, sir," said the L.A.C. as I climbed out, "leave the aircraft here and hand over to me all the equipment and logbooks."

"And what are we supposed to do?" I asked.

"You go to the mess," he said. "They'll send you on to the transit camp at Algiers tomorrow." So it had been just another ferry trip, had it? Dejectedly, we climbed into the lorry which was to deliver us to the mess.

We moved along the dusty road round the perimeter of the airfield. I was in the rear of the lorry, looking back, when suddenly I saw a familiar figure—that of my old Cambridge friend, Ioan Vaughan Jones. I stood up and shouted: "Jones! Jones!" But we were travelling too fast and he didn't hear me.

Mugs Of Muscatel Wine

I guessed that Ioan was heading for the mess and I waited there for him to turn up. Presently he came through the door, looking bored; and then he saw me. His eyes opened wide, and he grinned. "Jimmy!" he shouted. "At last you've succeeded in growing a moustache! What the hell are you doing out here?" He found it hard to believe that only a day before I had been in England.

He ordered a bottle of muscatel from the barman. "You must try this beautiful wine, Jimmy," he said. "There's nothing in it, of course, no strength at all—but it's refreshing." I knew nothing of these local brews and drank several mugs of it while we talked over old times and what we had each done in our years of separation.

Ioan introduced me to several pals of his, and Mac, my second pilot, joined the party. By midnight we were a merry throng. I went out for a quiet stroll under the stars, but when the fresh air hit me I suddenly found myself lying full length on the sand. With difficulty I got up again, only to fall down once more. So this was Vaughan Jones's "weak" wine! My head seemed as clear as a bell, but I just could not stand up straight.

A Painful Morning After

The next thing I remember was waking up, in the bright glare of the North African sun, lying on my bedroll on the floor by the main door of the mess. Everybody going in and out had to step over my prostrate form. Painfully I pulled myself together, only to learn that all my crew had gone on to Algiers by transport plane at dawn. I sought out Ioan and told him what I thought of his stunt. "We'll get you a ride to Algiers," he promised, and I managed to wangle myself on to an Anson that was making the trip.

A few weeks later we were posted back to England and attached to 271 Squadron at Doncaster. This squadron had been flying vegetables to the Orkneys in antiquated Harrow bombers, but W/Cdr. Booth, my new C.O., called us together to announce our new rôle. "We are now part of the newly formed Transport Command," he said, "and we are to be re-equipped with American Dakotas. We shall be used for troop-carrying, glider-towing and general transport work." Nobody really knew what this all meant, but in the next few months we were to find out rapidly.

Before we received our full complement of Dakotas, we were shifted to Down Ampney, in Gloucestershire, where we began to train

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THE UNBELIEVER

by DOROTHY M. JOHNSON

ILLUSTRATED BY FORSTER

For five years he lived with the Indians; then he tricked them. Now he was going back—more scared than ever before

MAHLON MITCHELL lived with the Crow Indians for five years when he was a young man, left them without farewell and returned to them when he was old and defeated.

Whatever you think about Mahlon Mitchell, you must say he was a brave man. He was afraid to go back to the Crows, but he went anyway—and it does not matter that he went because he was desperate. He was never more afraid in his life.

There were six in the party that went looking for Yellow Calf's village. Lieutenant Bradford had with him Sergeant O'Hara and three troopers; that made five. The sixth man was red-haired Mahlon Mitchell, wearing buckskin while the others wore cavalry blue. He was the scout who would find the Crows for them. He was the white man who knew Indians because he had been one. He was important for the first time in thirty years.

There was no man anywhere better fitted for his job as scout and interpreter, but he had to beg to get it.

"I got influence with the Crows," Mitchell had boasted to the major back at the fort. "I was a headman among 'em."

The major had frowned with a frozen look about his mouth that was as insulting as spoken doubt. Mitchell was not then a scout; he was only a rheumatic old civilian woodcutter for the fort, too stiffened with age and old wounds to do a good day's work. And he was desperate, because he knew he would be sent back to the States with the next wagon train, back to oblivion.

He volunteered for the mission to the Crows.

"I doubt if you could stand the trip," the major said coolly. "You might play out."

Mitchell forgot that he was a petitioner. "Play out?" he shouted. "I rode ninety miles and crawled ten with a broken leg one time. I didn't play out!"

"You're an old man now," the major reminded him.

This was no time for anger. It was a time for pride. With his head back, staring scornfully, he said, "I'm still Mahlon Mitchell. I'm the man they called Iron Head, for my red hair. I've counted coup with the best of 'em. And the Crows ain't forgot me!"

"Very well," the major said at last. "Lieutenant Bradford is to find Yellow Calf's band and give them presents, promising more presents if they will stop trading ammunition to the Sioux."

Crows and Sioux were enemies, but they did business together when it was worth while—and ammunition the Crows got from white men was blasting at other white men out of Sioux guns.

"You will have an escort of twenty men as far as Green Springs," the major said. "That'll get you through Sioux country."

They had got through, and the escort had gone back, and the scout was Mahlon Mitchell, but that was all he had to cling to. The journey to the Crows was a new path to danger, and what end would there be if he lived through it? Only the perilous return to the fort, the banishment back to the States, the slow withering in a poorhouse.

But he would have this to remember: that he had once more courted danger.

The Crows had found them. Mitchell had been keeping the news to himself for a quarter of an hour, silently superior to the vigilant troopers who looked without seeing.

"Lieutenant," he remarked, "here's where we better wait. There's a couple of Indians up over that hill, and right here is a good place to talk."

They waited, the soldiers as patient as their horses.

Mitchell remembered the way he had taken leave of the Crows thirty years before—on impulse, because the opportunity came, but the idea had been a long time growing.

IT started with a sneer on the face of a fur trader's clerk when Mitchell rode in to a trading post with a party of Crows and saw to it they drove a hard bargain. The clerk's attitude had said without words: Squaw man. Injun lover. Living with a bunch of savages. And you were a white man once!

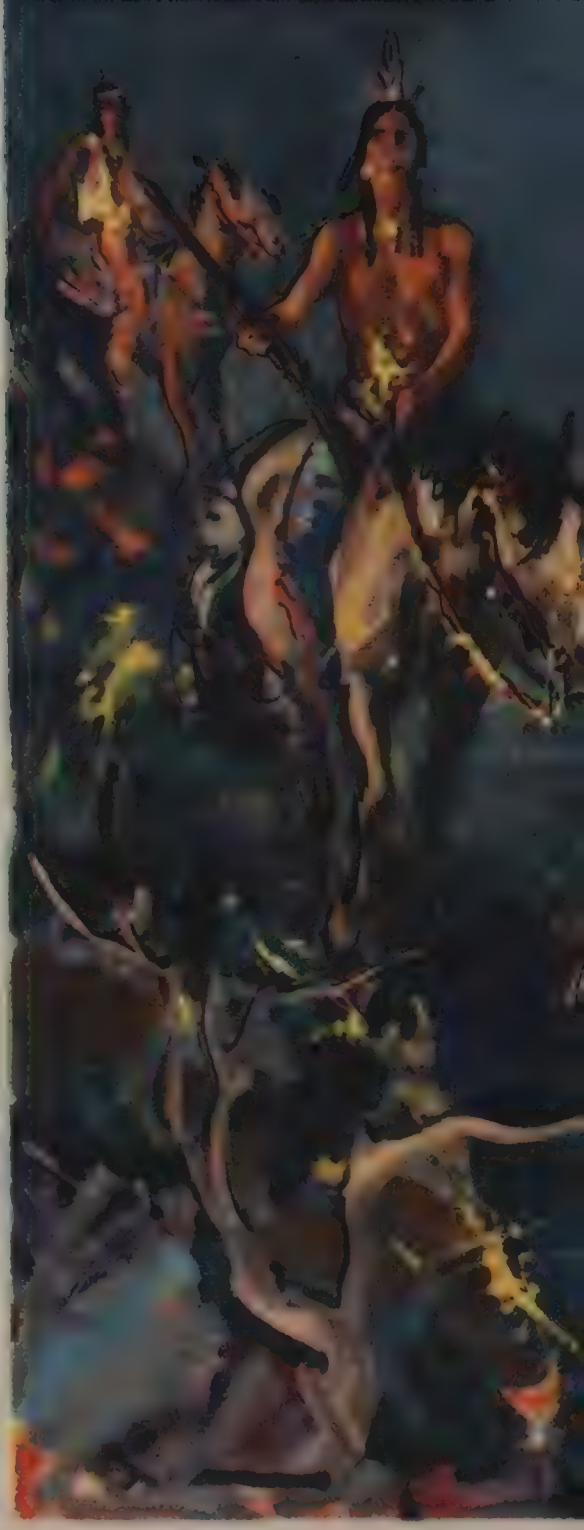
When the time came, Mitchell went back to be a white man again.

He had been one of a party that went afoot to steal horses from the Cheyenne. They were discovered, and, with a Crow named Drives His Horses, he had got separated in the resulting fight.

Drives His Horses was wounded, and they had one horse for the two of them. When they reached a stream ten miles from the Cheyenne camp, Mitchell knew the wounded man could not live.

Mitchell stayed with him until dawn. Then he finished him off with a knife and rode away on the captured pony.

After a while he convinced himself that killing Drives His Horses had been necessary and even merciful; he had put the suffering man out of his misery. He had scalped him, too, to make it look like Cheyenne work, but he preferred to forget that.



The two Indian scouts came over the hill and si

If the Crows, to whom he was now returning, guessed the truth about his departure, his own finish would not be quick or merciful.

When the two Indian scouts came down over the hill, Mitchell expelled his breath. Nobody could have said he sighed. With a sweeping gesture, he took off his ragged hat, so the Crows could see what remained of the bushy red hair that had been his pride. The thin, curling remnants hung to his shoulders.

Watching the two Indians sidle their horses down the hill, he realized: they're too young to remember me. They were seasoned warriors, from the looks of them, but not old enough to have been his comrades on horse raids against the Cheyenne or war parties seeking vengeance from the Sioux.

The two Crows pulled up their horses, staring. One of them asked a question; Mitchell could not catch the words. He knew cold terror: have I forgotten the Crow tongue, or am I getting deaf?

The Indian spoke again—and Mitchell no longer doubted anything. What the Crow said, in a tone of awe, was: "Iron Head! Iron Head has come back!"

"I am Iron Head," he answered. "I have come back to my brothers."

The man who had spoken dismounted and

led their horses down the slope. Mitchell swept off his hat and sat bareheaded, waiting. There was nothing to suggest he was apprehensive or afraid

walked forward. There was pride in his movements and honour in the ornaments he wore. He was a warrior with standing in the only profession fit for a man. But he came without arrogance. He came as one asking equality.

He stared into Mitchell's face and said: "I am Bull Shoulders. I am the son of Iron Head."

Mitchell squinted. "Well, by God," he muttered, "it could be you are!"

And what about the Quiet One, your mother? he wanted to ask. Is she living and old? Or did she die young, long ago?

He did not speak her name. There could be no good news about the Quiet One. He did not want to know that she was dead. He did not want to know that she was old.

He could feel the lieutenant's growing irritation, but he let Bradford wait for a translation.

To Bull Shoulders he said: "My son is a warrior. He has counted coup?"

"Many times," Bull Shoulders answered with proper pride.

Mitchell held out his hand, and the warrior took it.

Mitchell grinned at the lieutenant. "I told you I had influence with 'em. They ain't forgot Iron Head. This young fellow says he's my son, and I never knew I had one."

Mitchell and Bradford rode side by side when they entered the Crow village.

They never caught on about Drives His Horses, Mitchell told himself with relief. They remember only the good things—and that's how it ought to be. Well, I brought 'em luck all the time; they always said so. I was good medicine—until that last fight.

Their hunts were successful in those old days, and their war parties came home singing, with scalps and captured horses and tales of valour.

They were always lucky—until that last raid, when the warriors were surprised and scattered, and Iron Head killed his friend to become Mahlon Mitchell again.

"They think well of you," the lieutenant commented.

Mitchell could afford to be modest. "They said I was good medicine."

But I wasn't good medicine for myself after I left them, he admitted, remembering the dreary years of failure at farming and trading, as blacksmith and deck hand and bullwhacker.

He had drifted back at last to the frontier country of his youth to work for the army, cutting wood. Life had no savour any more. Before the years of dull disaster there had been the years of danger when his blood ran hot in his veins. Youth could not be revived, but its companion, peril, could still be found by a man who took the trouble to look.

When he volunteered as a scout on the mission to the Crows, he knew he might be setting forth to his last adventure.

"You know Yellow Calf, you said," Bradford reminded him.

"Well enough. I knowed his older brother." (And I left him dead beside a creek.) "Yellow Calf is maybe ten years younger'n me. He was just a boy, getting ready to pray for his medicine, when I first met the Crows. When I left, he was a brave. I remember the first war party he ever went on."

There was a stern, fierce orderliness about life for a Crow Indian. He grew up longing for glory; he starved and prayed for magic, for medicine; when he thought he had it, he went seeking danger. After a while, he died. The life of a white man was infinitely more complicated. There were too many things a man could want, and too many ways to fail in trying to get them.

We were young a long time ago, Mitchell realized with a shock when the chief came towards them. Time had dug furrows in the dark cheeks.

Yellow Calf did not extend his hand. He stood staring into Mitchell's face. He asked with respect, almost with humility: "Is it Iron Head himself who has come back to his brothers?"

It ain't because he don't recognize me, Mitchell told himself. No, it's because he's

Slowly, she brushed his hair, saying: "It is good that Iron Head has come back to his people"

scared. He thinks that maybe I'm a spirit.

"It is Iron Head himself, who once lived with spirits," he answered. "The story is for Yellow Calf alone."

Mitchell was in no hurry to spin his tale. "Yellow Calf is a great warrior and a leader of his people," Mitchell said. "When we were young men, I knew it would be so."

"I did not know it," Yellow Calf answered thoughtfully. "Iron Head's medicine must have told him. His medicine was always strong." He added, after a pause: "I hope my brother Iron Head still has his medicine."

Mitchell could not admit failure. Boasting was in his very blood. "I have better medicine now," he lied. "Because for a time—I do not know how long—I lived with spirit people."

He smoked silently, letting the chief's anxiety increase, before he told the story. He made it up as he went, borrowing from all the magic tales he had ever heard in the Crow lodges. He told of fighting side by side with Drives His Horses against a warrior who grew taller and taller, and finally turned into a white wolf that took Mitchell far away on a cloud to a place where all people were wolves, and kept him there. Yellow Calf covered his mouth, indicating wonder, and shook his head in sympathy for his friend.

Mitchell ended: "I did not see Drives His Horses any more. I did not see him today. Nor Hump Bull nor Whirlwind, who were with us that day."

Yellow Calf shook his head. "They are dead, and many others. Whirlwind lies not very far from here. Long after that fight, I went back to that place and hunted until I found my brother, Drives His Horses. I knew his bones by the things that were with them. I brought them back wrapped in a blanket. I thought the Cheyenne had killed him. Now I know it was the white wolf spirit."

Mitchell said sadly: "Even after the white wolf put me down by a river in the darkness with a crash of thunder, I did not come back to the Crows. I thought I might be unlucky for them, because the spirits took away my medicine bag. So I went back to the white men to find out. But it was not so. Everywhere I went, the white men were lucky. I think I have even better medicine now than before."

"It is true they get stronger and richer," Yellow Calf agreed. "I am glad Iron Head has come again to the Crows."

As if, Mitchell thought, he figured I was going to stay. The Crows ain't so well off as they used to be. Not so many good horses, and the lodges are ragged. Hunger is just over the next ridge.

Yellow Calf said: "In the lodge prepared for Iron Head, there is a woman waiting. She is old. Maybe Iron Head would rather have a young woman there."

"Iron Head is not young any more," Mitchell answered, grinning.

Walking towards the lodge, he recalled: She never was a beauty, and she'll be an old, sagging squaw now. But she never talked my head off, the way most of them do. By God, it's like coming home!

She was waiting by the entrance, where old women were allowed to sit, with her blanket over her face. Without seeing, he knew how she looked. Shapeless and seamed with wrinkles, without joy—but with a silent pride that no one could take away.

Mitchell sat down in the master's place. Without greeting, he said: "Iron Head wants his woman to brush his hair."

She came without a word. In peaceful silence, she brushed his hair with the furry tail of an animal. After a while, she said: "It is good that Iron Head has come back to his people."

My people, he thought. More than the whites ever were. And what if I was to stay with 'em? "I had two white women for my wives," he told her. "The Quiet One is a better wife than either." That much he could give her to remember and to tell her friends. . . .

Bradford's mission was accomplished with astonishing ease, though the talk about it took half a day of eloquence. Yes, the Crows would stop trading ammunition to the Sioux. The Sioux were enemies; the only reason for trading was to get things the Crows did not have. The Crows would be glad to accept these things as gifts from their white father.

Yellow Calf spoke. "Once our brother, Iron Head, lived with us. His medicine was good. We were a rich people with many strong fighting men and good horses. Then Iron Head went away and we did not know why. Now he has come back to tell us what happened."

Mitchell told them the same story Yellow Calf had heard, without deviation in a single detail, as stories were supposed to be told. Then he sat down again, and when Lt. Bradford frowned because he had not interpreted the long speech, he paid no attention. His medicine was good again.

One after another, the stern warriors spoke, offering him paradise. Iron Head had come back; Iron Head should stay and the Crows would be strong again.

For Mahlon Mitchell there could be no better life than this, among the Crows. Age had put aches in his bones, stiffness in his joints, but he was no longer required to compete with the young men for glory. He could count his coups among his equals, and his deeds were as splendid now as when he had performed them. But he must not let them think he was easy to woo.

"Iron Head has come back to his brothers," he replied gravely. "He would like to stay with them. But his medicine told him only to come back. He does not know whether he was meant to stay. He must ask his medicine. Tomorrow he will go to find out what to do."

Ah, my brothers, you are easier to fool than the white men! I can wind you around my finger. I will never let you guess that only with you is my medicine strong!

When he set out for the hill where he would speak to his medicine, he took a roundabout way. Yellow Calf had told him where the body of Whirlwind had been placed after that warrior had died of wounds nine winters before. There had been great mourning. His women had cut their hair and gashed their legs.

On a platform of branches in a spreading tree, what was left of Whirlwind lay under the sky. Tatters of a blanket that had wrapped the body shredded down from the sagging platform. No birds were there; crows and buzzards had finished long ago. Under the tree were tumbled the time-whitened bones of a sacrificed horse.

Mitchell dismounted, grunting with stiffness and pain. He stood with his fists on his hips, looking up, feeling dull anger because the years were gone.

Whirlwind had been born in a Crow lodge and had died on the prairie. He had lived with valour and without doubts, fitting the environment to which he was destined and never needing to search for a better one.

"Does that horse they killed for you come when you whistle?" Mitchell asked aloud. "Does that rotten blanket keep you warm in winter?"

Superstitious fools, the lot of them, he told himself. They were all afraid of everything—except death. Any animal might be a spirit, any bird song might be a message. The messages were mystery, the spirits were almost always bad. The Crows were savages, shivering with terror of all that was around them, yearning for good medicine to save them from perils they did not understand.

But Mitchell burned with envy for a man whose life had been perfect, unquestioning, without deviation; for a man who was honourably dead and beyond all torment.

He hobbled his horse at the foot of a medicine hill, wanting to open his heart to the magic that would be there if he were an Indian, but scorning it as nonsense because he was a white man.

He went through the motions of praying. Officially, he would not eat or drink until he had a message from a spirit. But who could see, after dark, if he chewed pemmican filched from a parfleche of the Quiet One or crept

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The Queen's Gardener plans his biggest job

by RONALD W. CLARK

With "assault waves" of plants and a complex battle-plan, he treats the Coronation display as a military manoeuvre

William Hepburn examines a single dahlia in the nursery hidden away in the middle of Hyde Park. For the Coronation route, he is growing 200,000 "reliable" plants

SOME YEARS AGO, Queen Mary, walking round the grounds of Hampton Court, was particularly impressed by one variety of soft blue tulip. "Wouldn't that go well on a yellow carpet," she said to the superintendent of the gardens, who was accompanying her.

Next year, as she was again being escorted round the grounds by the superintendent, they came to the same bed, ablaze this time with the blue tulips against a yellow background.

"Fancy your remembering that," she said to William Hepburn, the brisk, white-haired gardener who, as superintendent of the Central Royal Parks, is today responsible for most of London's Coronation flowers.

Hepburn, an Edinburgh man—he received part of his training in the city's Royal Botanic Gardens—is little more than half-way through a year's preparations that will come to a climax on June 1, when the last of about 200,000 flowers are ready along the Coronation route.

He has already had some awkward moments. There was the time, late last year, when he stood in the centre of Hyde Park, anxiously sniffing the air. All around him lay the clammy yellow mist of a swirling pea-souper which had blacked-out the city for more than two days. Now, at last, the fog was lifting. And Hepburn knew that, with any luck, no major alterations would be needed in the complex battle-plan which he has worked out for the Coronation flowers display. "The fog left its trail, but nothing that we can't overcome," he says.

Fewer Bulbs This Year

When the fog clamped down over London, coating with yellow grime the four and a half acres of glasshouses which are hidden away in the middle of Hyde Park, Hepburn had already dealt with the bedding-out of some 175,000 tulips and thousands of other bulbs. More than 20,000 antirrhinums and 30,000 pansies are included in the plans he worked out last summer.

"We're growing fewer bulbs and dahlias this year, and concentrating more on the flowers which come to perfection in early June," he says. "All the same, there will be about 25,000 tulips in the beds and borders at Hyde Park Corner alone."

For Hepburn, producing the additional 200,000 flowers needed for official Coronation decorations, and bringing them all to perfection at just the right time, is merely the latest of a long series of special gardening tasks. During the thirty years he has spent running Royal Parks for the Ministry of Works, he has been in charge of Greenwich Park, Hampton Court Park, and Bushy Park—where he had to organize food production during the war.

"One of my worst moments was at Hampton Court," he says. "The Thames rose so high that the icy water flowed round the roots of the Great Vine. That gave me the jitters for quite a while." The vine had to be carefully watched for days. Finally, the waters went down. No damage had been done, for the vine had not yet started to shoot.

Queen Mary Understood

There was also the occasion when Queen Mary visited Hampton Court unexpectedly. "I had had a waterfall fitted up in the Wilderness," says Hepburn, "but it was not in operation when Queen Mary arrived. I signalled for it to be turned on. As we went into the garden, I saw a fountain instead of a waterfall—someone had turned on the water too hard. I had to explain that that was not exactly what was intended." Queen Mary was most understanding. "Of course, it would happen just the day I came," she commented.

As Superintendent of the Central Royal Parks, Hepburn is responsible, with his staff of more than three hundred, for Hyde Park, the Green Park, St. James's Park and Kensington Gardens, and a score of other unexpected places. He has

under his care the forty-five acres of Buckingham Palace grounds, those of Marlborough House and Clarence House, and those of No. 10 Downing Street. "There are also the window-boxes of No. 11 Downing Street, and all the Whitehall window-boxes," he says, "as well as the flower beds in front of Buckingham Palace."

For years these beds were filled with such shrubs as rhododendrons. Then, the story goes, Queen Mary suggested that, instead, bulbs should be planted there. To the suggestion that the flowers would be stolen, she replied that Londoners could be trusted. "And it's certainly true," says Hepburn, "that thefts from those beds have been infinitesimal."

Hepburn was first briefed for his Coronation job last June. "I was told the number of extra square feet that would have to be filled with flowers—more than four thousand square feet, or something approaching an acre. I was told the shapes, sizes and numbers of the various window-boxes that would be put up along the Coronation route and elsewhere—and, of course, the colour plans which had been decided by the chief architect."

Then Hepburn's planning began. "I decided that we'd need an additional 200,000 plants," he says. "It was no use trying out experimental varieties, as we wanted something reliable that wouldn't let us down."

Final details are still being settled, but what was provided for the last Coronation is a good guide. Then, the highlights were a vast arch of picked rhododendrons over the south entrance to Hyde Park, and the decorations of Admiralty Arch, which included yellow azaleas and blue hydrangeas in flower-boxes along the top and a number of hanging boxes swinging from the arch. There was also, beside the arch, a ten-foot crown of flowers and leaves which had been sprayed in silver and gold.

"This year," says Hepburn, "the overall colour scheme will be red, white, blue and gold; and, if anything, there will be even more colour than in 1937.

"One main problem this time is keeping enough reserves in hand during every stage of the operation so that any sudden calamity brought about by the weather can be offset by pushing new flowers into the breach. What we want is to get the bad weather over as soon as we can—I've known frosts in June before now—and then a gradual warming up during February, March, April and May.

"As everything has to come into full flower at just the right time, any exceptional spell of warm weather will cause us trouble—we might have to retard very many plants by moving them to different glasshouses or by shading them."

To Coronation amateur gardeners, Hepburn says: "Remember that each plant is an individual thing. If it has healthy roots and leaves, it probably won't come to too much harm. However, in view of the date of the Coronation, it will be advisable not to plant out summer bedding plants before May 24—but, of course, much will depend on the weather prevailing."

As to weather forecasts, Hepburn is slightly sceptical. "Give me a good gardener's opinion in preference to a forecast any day," he says.

First orders for the Coronation plants were placed as far back as September. "There is also an annual order for flower-pots that runs into six figures, and another for a good many hundred cubic yards of loam." In the Hyde Park glasshouses there are already four thousand hydrangeas. "There will be others later on, and in March many of them will go into the Palm House."

There are tall whippy-looking Wand flowers from South Africa whose pale rose blooms should be ready for June 2, as well as gladioli and golden chrysanthemums—"not the winter-flowering chrysanthemums that most people know"—which are being specially forced on for the Coronation.

"I've also written to most of the Dominions and Colonies, asking for special plants," says Hepburn. Although it will be winter in such places as Australia, I'm hoping that we'll get some unusual flowers flown in."

If they arrive safely, they will probably be planted in Parliament Square, in front of the Dominion and Colonial stands. Already, three hundred lily bulbs have been sent as a gift from British Columbia for a bed in one of the parks.

There are also the six rare *strelitza regina*, or bird of paradise plants, some of which Hepburn hopes will flower in time for the Coronation. If so, they may be used at one of the official receptions, for which the Central Royal Parks provide the flowers.

Much of the Coronation work is handled on a semi-military basis, with the flowers brought forward in what Hepburn calls assault waves. If something should go wrong with one lot due to the weather, the next wave is ready to fill the gap.

"As an example," he says, "we've got two thousand stocks. In a few weeks they'll be going into the cold frames outside. Then the second wave will come in for a few weeks before going outside. Altogether, we'll have about ten thousand in hand by the time we need them."

Day-to-day decisions are made by Hepburn either in his block of offices in the middle of Hyde Park, or in his quietly comfortable home nearby, London's "house in the country," which is disturbed only by a distant hum of traffic in Park Lane or the Bayswater Road.

There is only one trouble about living in the middle of Hyde Park, says Hepburn: "I can't even go out for a walk with my wife, without seeing some work in the Park that's got to be done."

The flower work is handled with the help of a stack of thick files. The "lupin file," for instance, shows exactly how many thousand plants are at each stage of development.

Apart from conferences, or personal inspection of the various parks, Hepburn's afternoon is often taken up with visits to one of his two main sources of supply. One is the four acres of thirty-one glasshouses which were moved in 1903 from Kensington Gardens to the middle of Hyde Park, where they are now skilfully concealed by shrubberies. "There are usually about 250,000 plants there," says Hepburn.

The other source is the Richmond Nursery in Putney Vale, which covers seven acres. About 40,000 wallflowers, 8,000 polyanthus and 10,000 sweet-williams are growing there now.

On the night of June 2, William Hepburn's biggest job will be over. But another one will just be beginning. "As soon as the Coronation stands come down we start on the next job—getting the grass back into condition again." THE END

TAKE MY TIP

TO solve the housewife's eternal problem of finding additional drying space on wet and foggy days, I make use of my child's playpen. I stand it on end and collapse the other end so that it forms a triangle. Each bar of the playpen then forms an arm, on which many clothes can be placed to dry in front of the fire.—Mrs. Joan Scothern, Bilborough, Nottingham.

Richard Dimbleby is co-operating with JOHN BULL *in a new spring feature which begins next week. Readers are invited to send their own simple, original gardening hints to DOWN YOUR GARDEN,* JOHN BULL, *189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1. Every week, Dimbleby will make a selection of the best, and* JOHN BULL *will pay three guineas for each on publication. "Down Your Garden" hints cannot be returned unless they are accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.*

GRIFFITH POWELL'S TOURIST AIRLIFT

Continued from page 13

routes. Today, Silver City flies up to 45,000 pounds of cheese from Cherbourg to Southampton every Sunday morning.

These cheese flights are often undertaken by planes that have carried crates of pigeons due to be released at dawn from a French airfield to race back to Great Britain. Last year, Silver City carried more than 100,000 pigeons to Scandinavia, Holland, Belgium, France and the Spanish border.

Silver City accepts something like a thousand charters a year and carries objects as diverse as lettuces and heavy machinery, live deer and regimental bands. Powell's planes have carried newspapers, washing machines, performing horses and steel files. After the Cairo riots last year they flew three large fire engines from Blackbushe to Egypt.

Two years ago an aircraft crashed at Nairobi and every part, except the fuselage, needed replacing. The freighter that carried the spares out returned to England with a cargo consisting of a Ford Prefect, an aircraft engine, two Cervel cats, a lynx, four Cape hunting dogs, four monkeys and a ham. "We've flown everything," says Leslie Pavey, the twenty-seven year old commercial manager, "*including* the kitchen sink."

Two of Silver City's nine Bristol freighters are permanently employed on an airlift between the western zone of Berlin and Western Germany. Though the Russian blockade was largely suspended in 1948, exports of heavy machinery are still forbidden. Freight planes are the only way of breaking this blockade. Recently, one of these planes was detached to fly home from Stockholm a Bristol helicopter which had been making demonstration flights round Europe.

The rise of Silver City has been mainly due to Powell's capacity to see a public need and to fill it. One of Imperial Airways' star pilots, he held the first master pilots' licences ever granted both for land planes and flying-boats. When he joined the R.A.F. during the war, he became senior air staff officer to Air Marshal Sir Frederick Bowhill in Ferry Command. In 1945 he and four colleagues "got together and cooked up a company" which they called British Aviation Services.

At first their work consisted almost entirely of ferrying to owners and buyers all over the world the thousands of war-surplus planes piled up in Europe. Next they took over the management of Silver City Airways, an airline set up by mining interests, mainly to fly their technicians between Great Britain, South Africa, India, Malaya and Australia. Silver City was the miners' name for Broken Hill, a silver mining camp in Australia.

Realizing that even after the war there was still a demand for flying V.I.P.s, Powell had one of his Dakotas fitted out as a V.I.P. plane. The company has flown many military and political notabilities, and has carried Winston Churchill on many of the flights he has made since the war.

At 6.30 one morning, Powell turned out at Blackbushe to see Churchill off. He was particularly pleased with himself, for even at that early hour he had managed to get the morning papers. When Churchill was comfortably seated, he went aboard and handed them over, neatly folded in a bundle. Churchill silently accepted them, but his face bore the challenging pout that struck terror into the hearts of so many of his wartime staff. "You haven't got the *Manchester Guardian*," he growled. Powell was shaken, but managed to smile deferentially. "It's the only one missing, sir," he said. Churchill held out the bundle. "Take them away," he snapped.

In 1947, Silver City was beaten out of the passenger market by the big airlines which were just beginning to recover from the war. British Aviation Services bought the company out and henceforth used the name for its own air operations. Though it still undertook some V.I.P. and passenger charter work, including the evacuation of Moslem refugees from India, the emphasis changed to freight. In 1948 it had two Bristol freighters on the Berlin airlift. "Unfortunately," says Powell, "they were slow compared with the American Skymasters, and tended to throw the operation out of step. Eventually, we were kicked off."

Cheaper Every Year

In England, the Bristols were fully occupied with freight work because most of the other freighting companies still had their planes in Berlin. But Powell foresaw fierce competition. He turned again to an old idea of flying cars across the Channel. "We had very little publicity," he says. "We got them on the novelty. After that we held them." Every year since the traffic has grown and the fares have come down. Meanwhile, Powell has quietly bought up all the Bristol freighters in the country, so that Silver City now has a fleet of nine.

Air freight charges are higher than road, rail and sea rates, but Powell insists that the extra cost is often worth while. Where speed is necessary—in emergencies, with perishable goods or to beat quota dates—the advantage is obvious. Also, air freight needs little packaging. Refrigerators, which need elaborate casing when shipped by sea and rail, can be flown upright in plain brown paper.

Helicopters May Take Over

This summer, the cost of flying a car or bicycle to the Continent will be greatly reduced. From April 1, for a car under 12 ft. 6 in. in overall length the single fare from Lympne to Le Touquet will be £7 10s., rising by stages to £20 for any length over 15 ft. 6 in. A pedal cycle will cost 5s. and a small solo motor cycle 35s. Each passenger will pay £2. Fares from Southampton to Cherbourg will be about a quarter as much again.

This year, too, Silver City hopes to buy, at a cost of £90,000 each, six Bristol freighters with extra long noses to take cars of the longest type known. Being an astute businessman, Powell has inserted in the contract a clause that these must not be built for possible competitors. Later, he hopes to have helicopters with detachable freight compartments.

"Every time you take a look around the world you see half a dozen urgent airlifts in operation," he says. "The problem is not finding business, but how to fill the demand." THE END

You must have Restful Sleep- *to cope with this restless age*

CONSIDER the conditions of life today. Think of the rush and bustle, the incessant clamour, the craze for speed.... When the day ends, some of its tension follows you into the night. It may rob you of the sleep you need so much.

Sleep is "Tired Nature's sweet restorer." You must have it to refresh the weary body, to repair worn nerves, to renew strength and energy. But Nature needs help to overcome the influences that oppose sleep.

It is significant that very many people regularly drink a cup of 'Ovaltine' as a night-cap. Its warm, comforting nourishment helps relaxation of body and mind, has a soothing effect on the nerves and promotes the conditions favourable to sleep.

When sleep comes, 'Ovaltine' continues to assist in Nature's work of restoration. It is made from Nature's best foods which contain important nutritive elements including quickly assimilated natural sugars of malt and milk, ***plus*** vitamins. ***'Ovaltine' is also fortified with additional vitamins B_1 and D.***

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IF I WERE STALIN'S WAR CHIEF

Continued from page 12

our army, we should be able to overrun most of the Continent very quickly. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization powers have barely twenty divisions in immediate readiness, whereas we have three times as many to form the mechanized spearhead—with plenty more to follow them up, while the Nato reserves are scanty. Should it become necessary, we could smooth our progress with a few atomic bombs, or the threat of them.

Even if we were temporarily checked on the fringes, such as mountain-girt Spain or sea-girt North Africa, these don't offer facilities comparable to England as bases for an American counter-offensive. In Africa, too, it should not be difficult to stir up sufficient trouble among the natives to impede the development of American bases until we can invade it. They are already on the boil.

Damping American Ardour

So there seems a good prospect of keeping the Americans at a distance, and for a time long enough to damp their ardour—if Britain can be liquidated. Our propaganda could help by sounding the note: "If you send your boys to Europe, you'll never see them again—it's a one-way ticket to Siberian prison camps."

Of course, we must expect long-range bombing from the American continent, but there would be a better chance of checking it, or at least curtailing it, than shorter-range bombing from bases in or near Europe. Moreover, there is reason to doubt whether the Americans, with their extremely vulnerable cities, would obstinately carry on a prolonged competition in atomic bombing under such conditions. The more highly developed civilization has more to lose, and would suffer worse, in such a competition in devastation, even if it could throw the most bombs.

America's allies in Europe certainly would not welcome it. They may want her to defend them against invasion, but they don't relish the idea of eventual liberation by a campaign of atomic devastation—and in such a case we should take good care that they shared the affliction with us.

To rub in the folly of a prolonged bombing match with atomic weapons—as well as to cause panic and confusion—it might be worth while for us at an early stage to make some raids on New York and other big American cities. They are well within the radius of our new TuG-75 bomber. Our older but plentiful TU-4s, modelled on the American Flying Fortresses, could also reach transatlantic targets. They don't have to come back—and that enables them to make a wider detour in the approach. Our airmen are accustomed to regard "suicide" missions as natural in the course of duty. Moreover, they can land in Central America, whereas American airmen won't have much chance of finding refuge in Europe, once we've overrun it.

Holding Back The Atom

However, until our stock of atomic bombs has increased a lot, I am against using more than a few in transatlantic terror raids. In the first stage of a war, most of them should be reserved for England, or other European countries that show stubbornness.

England, and America's other satellite countries, all offer such crowded targets that they could be easily crippled. Thanks to Russia's immensely wider spread, and Stalin's foresight in dispersing our industrial plants, as well as our people's simpler and less luxurious way of life, we could probably survive five or ten times as many atomic bombs as our enemies could.

But I should naturally prefer to avoid the risk and the damage, relatively less though it may be. So I would rather hold back our atomic bombing if and while our enemies hesitate to unleash theirs. We possess such great advantages in other respects. Our land forces, and our supporting air forces, are amply sufficient for us to strike in all theatres simultaneously. We've got a big balance of strength *everywhere* over our opponents, and it's desirable to find useful employment for our many unmechanized divisions.

"May I have the pleasure of—oops—sorry!"

In the Far East, I should use part of our Fourth Army, which is positioned near the Behring Strait, for a raiding stroke against Alaska. That is not a suitable line for a major operation, but even a small stroke there would play on the fears of the Americans and Canadians, and ensure a disproportionate diversion of their forces to guard their own continent.

My main thrust would be from Sakhalin and the Kuriles, reinforced from the nearby bases on the mainland, into Japan. There's only a small strip of water on that side, and our air force should be able to dominate it. Moreover, we have eight airborne divisions available.

"How Wise Stalin Was"

When the American divisions from Japan were rushed into Korea in 1950, I should have liked to throw my airborne forces into Japan—thus capturing the Americans' base and isolating them. That was the perfect retort to their impetuous move in bolstering up the South Koreans—and how amusing it would have been to put MacArthur himself in the bag! But Stalin thought it would be more profitable in the long run to encourage the Americans to bring over an increasing number of troops and become so fully bogged down in Korea as to weaken their capacity to defend other and more important places.

I can see how shrewd he was. For, as a result, our chances of overrunning Europe remain very favourable, while we should meet little serious opposition in pushing down through Iran and Iraq to the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean coast.

Turkey may be a tough nut defensively, but she doesn't actually lie in the path and she has not got the offensive equipment to interfere effectively with our advance past her eastern flank—or, for that matter, her western flank in Europe.

Overrunning the Middle East might not bring us the early use of its oil supplies, but would push our big enemies farther away and provide better cover for our own oilfields in the Caucasus and new industrial plants in the Urals. At present they are uncomfortably exposed to attack from that flank.

The only thing against our starting another "Korean" move in the Middle East is that, now, it would probably mean war—a full-scale world war. So I have been considering where we might try a move with less certain risk of American intervention.

It seems to me that the Indian area might be a favourable place. It should not be too difficult to get India and Pakistan fighting over Kashmir, and once the Pakistanis were in dire straits they might be induced to accept our "aid." It would be far more difficult for the Americans and British to support India in a fight started on that issue, and thus we might get well established. Our "aid" would, of course, go by air. The advent of the air age has much helped to transform the Indian dreams of Tsarist Russia into a realizable proposition for Soviet Russia.

A move to Pakistan's rescue could pave the way for us to succeed the British, who succeeded the Moguls as the rulers of India. It would also enable us to get into South-East Asia before our present useful but potentially dangerous allies, the Chinese.

There are such good chances of gain in various directions without a full-scale war that I would rather pursue these, in a careful way, as long as possible. That doesn't mean being timorously careful. Indeed, if I were quite sure that the Americans were going to force a showdown when their rearmament has gone further, and face us with a choice between retreat and war, I would favour striking first. For I'm not unduly worried about the outcome.

War Could Not Be Long

It is astonishing how Americans assume that in such a war they are bound to win in the long run because their output of oil and steel is much greater than ours. They don't seem to realize that, with our much more limited civilian consumption, we have got an ample margin for our armaments—large as these are. Furthermore, it seems absurd to picture a *long* war carried on by atomic bombing. A mere two such bombs of elementary type crumpled up Japan, an exceptionally tough nation. I can't imagine America's complex industrial civilization standing up to a long-duration trial of that kind.

Thus, on balance, very favourable conclusions can be drawn from a survey of our situation in comparison with that of our opponents. Nevertheless, I would not care to advise that an invasion should be undertaken. There are too many incalculables in present weapon development. We cannot be sure enough, by Stalin's standards, of fulfilling the two basic conditions that I specified at the outset. It would therefore be wiser to pursue our "camouflaged warfare" policy and strategy — what our opponents call the cold war—which shows many signs of continued and increasing success.

I would end my survey by saying that, as a Soviet soldier, I am profoundly conscious of the fundamental truth of Lenin's maxim, so masterfully applied by Stalin, that "the soundest strategy in war is to postpone operations until the moral disintegration of the enemy renders the mortal blow both possible and easy."

THE END

World Copyright

A DRINK OF WATER

Continued from page 15

die while he was gone, and yet—he must try it.

He frowned as he went out and saw the moon like a night sun in the sky, lighting up the village. He turned to the east and his heart leapt as he saw the cloud moving towards the village in a slow breeze. It seemed so far away, and it was moving as if it would take days to get over the fields. Perhaps it would; perhaps it would change direction and go scudding down into the west, and not a drop of water.

He moved off towards the well, keeping behind the huts and deep into the trees. It took him ten minutes to get near the barbed wire fence, and he stood in the shadow of a giant silkcotton tree. He leaned against the trunk and drew in his breath sharply as his eyes discerned a figure on the other side of the well, outside the barbed wire.

The figure stopped, as though listening, then began clambering over the fence.

Even as he peered to see if he could recognize who it was, a sudden darkness fell as the cloud swept over the moon in the freshening wind.

Manko cast his eyes upwards swiftly, and when he looked down again the figure was on the brink of the well, away from the sleeping watchdog.

It was a great risk to take; it was the risk Manko himself had to take. But this intrusion upset his plan. He could not call out; the slightest sound would wake the dog, and what it did not do to the thief, Rampersad would do with his shotgun.

For a moment, Manko's heart failed him. He smelt death very near—for the unknown figure at the well, and for himself, too. He had been a fool to come. Then a new frenzy seized him. He remembered the cruel red flush on Rannie's cheeks when he had left her. Let her die happy, if a drop of water could make her so. Let her live, if a drop of water could save her. His own thirst flared in his throat; how much more she must be suffering!

He saw the bucket slide noiselessly down and the rope paid out. Just what he had planned to do. Now draw it up, cautiously, yes, and put it to rest gently on the ground. Now kneel and take a drink, and put the fire out in your body. For God's sake, why didn't the man take a drink? What was he waiting for? Ah, that was it, but be careful, do not make the slightest noise, or everything will be ruined. Bend your head down. . . .

Moonrays shot through a break in the cloud and lit up the scene.

It was Sunny.

"*Beta!*" Before he could think, the startled cry had left Manko's lips.

The dog sprang up at the sound and moved with uncanny swiftness. Before Sunny could turn, it had sprung across the well, straight at the boy's throat.

Manko scrambled over the fence, ripping away his clothes and drawing blood. He ran and cleared the well in a great jump, and tried to tear the beast away from the struggling boy. The dog turned, growling low in the throat as it faced this new attacker.

Manko stumbled and fell, breathing heavily. He felt teeth sink into his shoulder and he bit his lip hard to keep from screaming in pain.

Suddenly the dog was wrenched away as Sunny joined the fight. The boy put his arms around the dog's neck and jerked it away from his father with such force that when the animal let go they both fell rolling to the ground.

Manko flung out his arm as he sprang up. In doing so, he capsized the bucket of water with a loud clang. Even in the struggle for very life he could not bear to see the earth sucking up the water like a sponge. In fear and fury, he snatched the empty bucket and brought it down with all his strength on the dog's head.

The animal gave a whimper and rolled off the boy and lay still.

"Who dat, who tiefing my water?" Rampersad came running out into the

yard, firing his shotgun wildly in the air.

"Quick, boy! Over de fence!" Manko grabbed the bucket and tossed it over. He almost threw Sunny to safety as the boy faltered on the wire. Then he half-dragged his own bleeding body up, and fell exhausted on the other side.

Sunny put an arm under his father and helped him up. Together they ran into the shadow of the trees.

THE noise of the gun and Rampersad's yells had wakened the whole village, and everyone was astir.

Father and son hid the bucket in a clump of dry bush and, waiting for a minute to recover themselves, joined the crowd which was gathering in front of Rampersad's hut.

Rampersad was beside himself with rage. He threatened them all with jail, screaming that he would find out who had stolen the water and killed the dog.

"Who is de tief? You catch him?" The crowd jeered and booed. "It damn good. Serve you right." Clutching his father's arm tightly, Sunny danced and chuckled with delight at Rampersad's discomfiture.

But suddenly silence and darkness fell together. A large, black blob of cloud blotted out the moon. The sky was thick with clouds piling up on each other, and there was a new coolness in the wind.

As one, the crowd knelt and prayed to the rain god. The sky grew black; it looked as if the moon had never been there. For hours they prayed, until Manko, thinking of Rannie, gently tapped his son and beckoned him away. They walked home hand in hand.

It was Sunny who felt the first drop. It lay on his hand like a diamond shining in the dark.

"*Bap?*" He raised questioning eyes to his father. "Look!"

As Manko looked up, another drop fell on his face and rolled down his cheek. The wind became stronger; there was a swift fall of some heavy drops. Then the wind died like a sigh. A low rumble in the east; then silence. Perhaps Parjanya was having a joke with them, perhaps there would be no rain after all.

And then it came sweeping in from the north-east, with a rising wind. Not very heavy at first, but in thrusts, coming and going. They opened their mouths and laughed, and water fell in. They shouted and cried and laughed again.

Manko approached the hut where Rannie lay, and he was trembling at what he would find. He said to the boy: "*Beta*. You stay here. I go in first to see *mai*." The boy's face went rigid with sudden fear. Though he was already drenched to the skin, he took shelter under the *pouí* tree in the yard.

Manko was hardly inside the door when he gave a sharp cry of alarm. He thought he saw a ghostly figure tottering towards him, its face luminous-grey. He flattened himself against the wall and closed his eyes. It was cruel of the gods to torment him like this. This was not Rannie: Rannie was lying in bed in the next room, she could not be alive any more.

"Manko." It was her voice, and yet it was not her voice. "What noise is dat I hear? Is rain?"

He could not speak. Slowly, he forced himself to stretch out his hand and touch her forehead. It felt cold and unnatural.

He withdrew his hand, and began to tremble uncontrollably.

"Manko," the lips formed the words. "Manko, give me water!"

Something fell to the floor with a clatter. He saw that it was a tin cup, and that she had been holding it in her hand. She swayed towards him, and he caught her. Then Manko knew that it was a miracle. Rannie was shaking with cold and weakness, but the fever was gone, and she was alive.

Realization burst upon him with such force that he almost fainted.

He muttered: "I will get some for you."

He picked up the cup and ran out into the lashing rain. Sunny, watching from the *pouí* tree, was astonished to see his father standing motionless in the downpour. He had taken off his shirt, and his bare back and chest were shining with water. His face, uplifted to the sky, was the face of a man half-crazy with joy. He might be laughing or crying, Sunny could not tell; and his cheeks were streaming, perhaps with tears, perhaps with Parjanya's rain. THE END

FROM MY FAMILY ALBUM

I SHALL always remember the coat and bonnet I wore for this photograph of me and my younger brother. The coat was a mauve velvet and made to last; all our clothes were—mother saw to that. It was several sizes too big and lasted me from the age of twelve (when this portrait was taken) until I was sixteen. I have avoided wearing mauve ever since.

The bonnet, on the other hand, did not last at all long. Not in the shape and style shown in the picture, anyway. Mother, who always tried to dress us better than any of the other children in our street, was very proud of the bit of ermine on it. Unfortunately, I left the bonnet at the photographer's studio and failed to notice the oversight till I got home. By then it was too late. When I went back to the studio my ermine was no longer there. Someone had knocked it off.

About this time, I was beginning to make my way as an entertainer in the north of England, singing at workingmen's clubs and going out with juvenile shows between spells of work in the cotton mills. Thanks to knowing a friendly stage hand, I was able to wander behind the scenes at the local theatre, watching the famous stars of the day and later mimicking their acts.

I remember coming back one night after an unofficial behind-the-scenes theatre visit and my mother asking what I thought of the acts. "I could lick the lot," I replied. But, at that time, a year or so after losing my ermine at the photographers, I was still mimicking the star turns.

Then, one day, someone said: "You'll never get anywhere. All you can do is mimic others." That did it. I've been myself ever since.

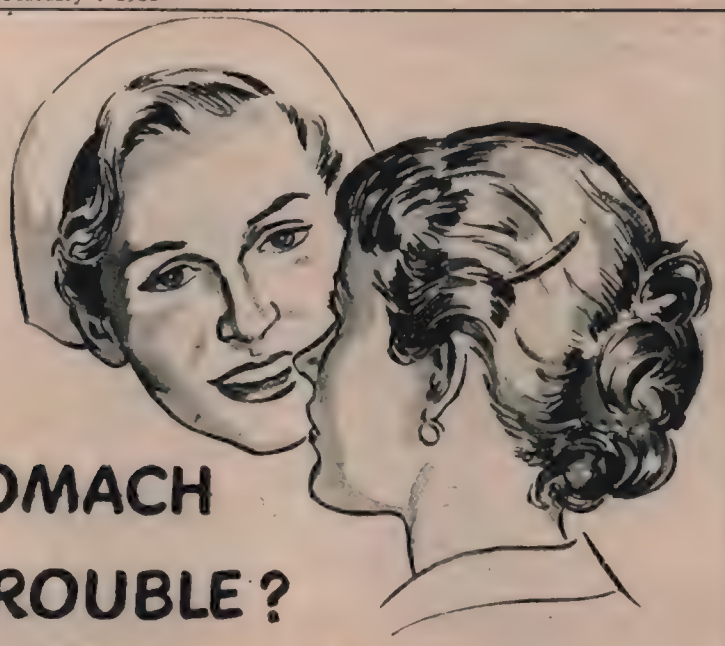
Today she is a leading variety star. For her name, see page 35

fill up and

feel

the difference

SHELL



STOMACH TROUBLE?

Take my advice. . . .

"I meet so many people who are bothered by acid-indigestion—just like you. And I always advise 'Milk of Magnesia'*—in fact I take it myself when I have indigestion. 'Milk of Magnesia' isn't just an antacid, it's a mild laxative as well, so it corrects acidity and keeps the system happy at the same time. It's so gentle, too—it's ideal for Baby's 'windigestion'."

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Good taste demands . . .

Hostess REGD

A John Dickinson PRODUCT MADE IN GREAT BRITAIN

Paper Serviettes & Doyleys

FORTUNE IS A WOMAN

Continued from page 10

stood up. I still felt shaky, and seeing who it was hadn't helped. I needed a drink.

The moulded balustrade of the gallery just above was broken. That was where the wood had come from. And my foot was crunching on bits of wood that crumbled like old biscuits.

The wind gusted against the house again, and the thing upstairs went *tap-tap-tap*. There was a funny smell somewhere. My brain was still working in fits and starts, but it seemed to be a good idea to get a better view of the broken balustrade. As I passed the pile of linen at the bottom of the stairs, my foot caught in a tangle of it and I lifted it away. The thing wasn't a dust-sheet—it was what appeared to be a good lace curtain.

The top of the stairs was darker, and just before I got to the broken balustrade the moon went in again. The break was almost opposite the door of Tracey's bedroom and two doors from the one I'd had when I'd stayed the weekend. The door of Tracey's bedroom was open, and through it I could just make out the grey oblong of the windows. I tried to see what had caused the break. It wasn't merely the handrail: one of the big twisted supporting balusters had given. Of course: this was where there had been woodworm.

Another curtain on the floor. Perhaps he'd tripped, fallen. But why the curtains?—unless my first suspicion, before I went to the brokers and was reassured, was actually true. An embittered man intent to seize the opportunity he'd rarely have: his mother away, the servants gone, alone except for his wife. . . . Not the small claim, this time, but the big one—setting him free from the incubus of a rambling, expensive house, setting him on his feet again, with enough capital to live comfortably. Perhaps Sarah was not in this major fraud, perhaps he'd sent her away, too.

Somehow, by mischance, he had leaned against the balustrade and it had given way. In the middle of his preparations, before he'd been able to destroy it, the house had destroyed him. . . .

I TURNED to go down again. And then a terrible thing happened. There'd been a lull in the wind for two or three minutes, and as I straightened up I heard Tracey's asthmatic breathing close beside me.

The moon brightened and quickened, and then died again. In the room behind me a French clock began to strike the hour. Nothing touched me. Nothing stirred. The wind was roaring away among the distant trees.

I couldn't move. Then I gripped the broken balustrade and slowly forced my head round, stared into the darkness.

"Tracey!"

No one answered.

I swallowed a dry lump and walked into the bedroom. There were blankets on the floor and the curtains were crooked at the window. The smell of Tracey's herbal cigarettes was strong. Perhaps that had suggested it. . . . I cursed my nerves, found I was still clutching a piece of wood off the balustrade, didn't throw it away. The feel of it gave me a silly sort of comfort.

And then I heard it again—or thought I heard it again—out in the passage behind me.

I wheeled and ran out.

"Tracey!"

The clouds were heavy and I couldn't see if the body was still there. The sound had seemed to come from farther along, at the corner where the passage branched towards the back of the house.

The corridor was narrow, but there were two good windows in it. I blundered along it to the next turn; another corner and two steps up. When I got there I couldn't hear anything.

After a bit I held my breath, and a second or so later I imagined I heard the creak of a floorboard beyond the steps.

"Who's there!" I said. "Is it you, Tracey?"

Tracey was dead: I'd seen him: was I mad, shouting like that? But his breathing, unmistakable. . . . I went on.

This part of the house, the shabby part, I knew less well. Not far away now was the *tap-tap-tap . . . tap-tap*.

Stop and take a grip. I'd come out on another landing beside the servants' staircase. That queer smell again. Five doors here, and the moon squinted through an open fanlight. There was dust in the moonbeams. A deflated-looking vacuum cleaner stood beside a cane chair.

The wind leaned against the house, and the old wood creaked. After the wind had gone, the *rat-a-tat* sounded behind the nearest door. I went in.

A box-room of some sort. Between me and the window was a forest of lumber.

I pushed my way in, treading on fishing tackle, and knocked over some skis. The window was banging. Outside the trees were waving wildly. Looking back from here, the landing seemed dark. I had a sudden desire not to go back there.

SOMEHOW I got out, tried the next door. Locked. The third was a bedroom; it smelt occupied, fusty. The fourth had trunks and suitcases on the bed. The fifth—with a window facing the moon—was a sort of sitting-room, with a radio by the door and an electric fire flanked by a couple of down-at-heel easy chairs. There was nobody in it; but on a side table was a small glass-bowled paraffin lamp.

I went in, got out a box of matches. The damned things were like straws; three broke before I could hold one to the wick. Then a slow, warm yellow light squeezed out the moon.

Comforting. It would show me all I wanted to see. I went back into the passage and stared and listened. There was nothing now—no breathing, no cigarette smell; even the window had temporarily stopped banging. Only that other smell. I looked at the moonbeams in which the dust was still floating. It was too thick for dust. It was smoke.

I ran down the servants' staircase to the ground floor, came out in a passage with doors, pushed through one, found myself in the butler's pantry. Wrong. Back into the passage and try the end door. A maid's sitting-room or something. Beyond that was a room with a Welsh dresser, an open fireplace, bulbs spread on trays. More smoke here; I took the door where most of it was coming from—and found myself again in the butler's pantry.

I coughed and waved away the smoke. Desperately urgent not to be lost in this house any more. I got back into the passage, where the stairs were, took the third door. A place for hats and coats; a telephone on a table. Backing out, I nearly knocked the glass of the lamp off. I turned back into the butler's pantry. There were two ways out of it, and I'd only tried—no, the

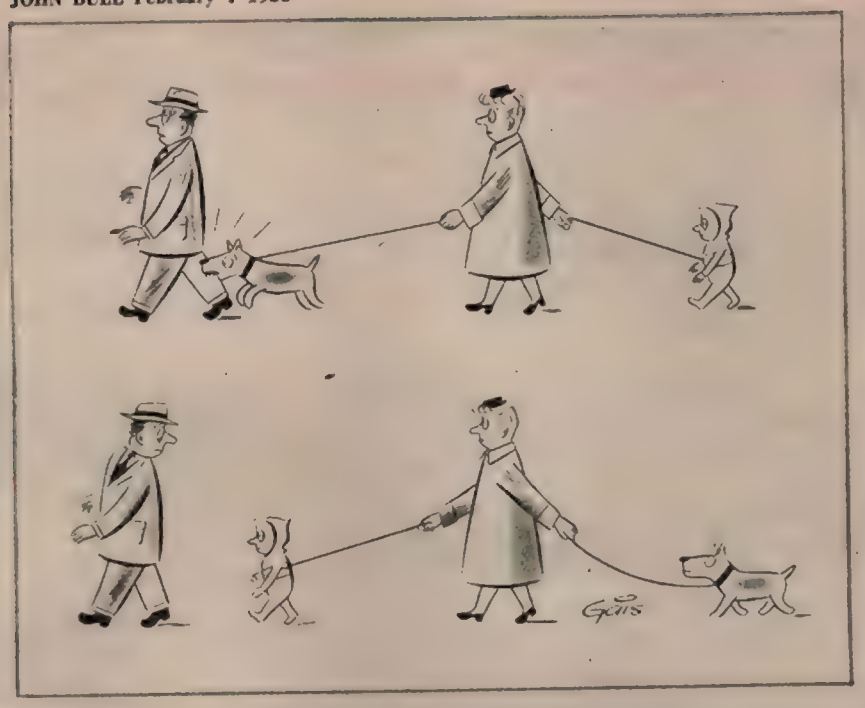
THE HUMAN MACHINE

Do unto others . . .

MANY of our bad relationships with others spring from the fact that we don't treat them as we do ourselves. We blame them—we *excuse* ourselves. We explain our own actions—we *criticize* and *judge* theirs. The result is inevitable—constant friction.

If we think about it, this isn't reasonable conduct. It's a preposterous way to behave. For how can goodwill be achieved if we forget that others have just as much right to be themselves as we have to be ourselves?

by ROFFE THOMPSON



other way led into the room with the bulbs. . . .

Stop and think. Must go back there. Smoke was thicker now, and as soon as I got into the next room I saw where I had gone wrong. A green baize door. I pushed through it and into the central kitchen.

Smoke in a wave—and heat for the first time. But no fire. A pile of old net curtains on the table, and a smell of paraffin. Coughing, I pushed through the door into the still-room. Less smoke here. Try the larder. No. Another door led to yet another passage and a lower sort of door that fairly obviously opened on cellar steps. Before I got to it I knew. You could hear the noise, a murmuring sort of noise.

The door jammed, but when it came open the heat struck in my face. No need for the lamp. I shoved it on a ledge and went down three or four steps.

They were big cellars, and this one was supported by two groups of wooden pillars fairly close together and probably under the main stairs. It looked as if two great fires had been built, one within each group of four pillars; but one only was ablaze so far. You could guess what materials had been used to create this furnace of white flames by seeing the other unalight: a candle guttering to its last inch amid a mass of shavings, and a big, precarious pile of plywood boxes and flimsy furnishings, reaching to the floorboards above.

At the bottom of the steps you weren't choked so much with smoke but the light and the heat were intolerable. I put a handkerchief over my eyes and reached forward into the middle of the second fire and snuffed the candle out. That wouldn't help much, because the whole pile would catch alight any moment from the other. I grabbed an iron rod to smash it out of harm's way, but something slipped at that moment in the first fire and a great mass of loose flame scattered over the cellar. This was no one-man job, if it could be got under at all.

I dodged a piece of blazing rag that was floating down and retreated up the steps. At the top I wiped away the tears from my eyes, took up the lamp, ran back, trying to remember. Passage, kitchen, room with bulbs, butler's pantry, coat cupboard. No mistake this time. Lift the receiver and dial.

It seemed to take a long time; as I waited I saw a cylinder partly hidden by coats. Fire extinguisher.

"I'm speaking from Lowis Manor," I said, "near Sladen. A very bad fire's broken out. In half an hour it'll be too late to save the house. Tell them to hurry."

"Lowis Manor, near Sladen," said the voice patiently. "Yes. What is the name, please?"

"Mr. Tracey Moreton," I said. "Hurry."

I slammed down the receiver and unhooked the extinguisher from the wall. Prewar and a bit rusty but it might work.

In the butler's pantry there was a sink and I turned the water on, pulled open half a dozen drawers, grabbed a towel, soaked it. Then I wound it into a sort of turban-cum-yashmak. The thing wouldn't stick on until I found a pin in an apron behind the door. In the silver drawer were an old pair of gloves Elliott probably used; I put them on. I was about to go when I saw a spectacle case in a corner of the shelves; I opened this, put on the spectacles. The room blurred at me, but they would protect my eyes.

The extinguisher under my arm, I ran back to the cellar.

The second fire hadn't caught, and the first didn't look any worse; but perhaps that was my distorted sight. The protection now was enormous; I could get close to the blaze. I dropped the extinguisher on its end and the thing worked. I directed the jet at the flames. Wood that had been incandescent became suddenly black and charred. But now the flames were high, too high, and the second pile had caught at the top.

As the extinguisher gave out, a piece of blazing wood fell across it and nearly knocked it out of my hand. I let it drop. Sparks caught on my sleeve; my coat came suddenly alight. I backed away, rubbed the flames out against a wall.

There was nothing more to do. By now, if I wasn't mistaken, the fire would already be up the main stairs.

Then I thought of Tracey still lying in the hall, lying there in spite of my imaginings. I wondered if it would be his wish to go with the house, making it a Greek funeral pyre. Whether he would or not, I couldn't let him.

I crawled up the steps and sat for a minute in the passage, feeling pretty nearly all in. I pulled off the towel, the gloves. My coat had lost part of its sleeve; one trouser leg was burned. Not so much smoke was coming out of here now. It meant that the fire had made a new exit.

I got up, spat, tried to set my bearings right. Back through the kitchen. The house was blazing now. In the kitchen you could hear the roar of it, just as if someone had turned up the draught on the kitchen range. This wasn't the room I'd come out into when examining the first fire damage. But if I made straight through . . .

I soon found the other kitchen. A grandfather clock was ticking away in it, measuring out the last minutes. I opened the farther door, and the heat leapt at me like a wolf. My estimate had been underweight. The hall and the stairs were blazing. There was no way through.

I backed out and shut it. There might be other ways of getting from the kitchen quarters to the front of the

Continued on page 31

Men that matter . . .

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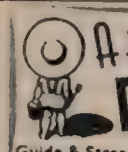

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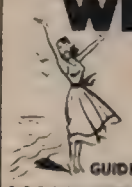

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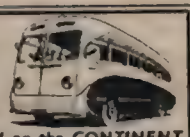

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FORTUNE IS A WOMAN

Continued from page 27

house, but if so I didn't know of them. The only other way was to get out of the house, go round.

It was silly, fumbling with the catch of the windows, but respectable habits still clung. I got the thing open and slid through. It was pitch dark where I got out, and I nearly fell down some area steps. I drew away from the house, skirting the greenhouses where I'd met Sarah that first day, rounded a potting shed, the wind striking wonderfully cool against me. Clouds were heavier than ever, the house nearly as black. The window I'd left glimmered, where the paraffin lamp still burned, and, as I looked, there was a sort of flicker at another window farther along, a pretty golden flicker like the winking of an eye. That was all.

I BEGAN the circuit of the house. At the dining-room where I'd broken in, I stopped and looked. There was only the tiniest glow. I put my leg over the sill to climb in again, but there I stopped, listening. An unmistakable bell. It was half-a-mile away yet.

I had to make up my mind quickly. I could meet the brigade and tell them lies; or tell them the truth; or make myself scarce right away. There was nothing more I could do. The firemen would get Tracey's body out. Better to go. No questions asked. None to answer. Sarah could do that. I had to see what Sarah would do.

I brought my leg out, and, as the fire-engine came in under the gatehouse and stopped—they had to take off their ladders to get through—I slid silently back through the herb garden towards the muddy lane and the car.

It wasn't quite as easy as that. The clamour of the bell had already caught people's attention; as I was going to drop into the lane I saw two figures coming from the direction of Lowis Farm. They stopped quite close to me, peering over the hedge; then, when they saw the fire-engine come slowly in, they scrambled over the wall, pushed their way towards the house. One passed me within a yard; I thought he must see me. That sort of thing makes you feel more like a felon than anything else.

I slid down, getting muck on my trousers, made for the car. As soon as I got in the road the moon came full out; you could see two or three other people hurrying towards the fire. One looked like a policeman on a bicycle. I kept in the shadow as much as I could, until I came to the car. Just as I was getting in, I saw someone coming along the road towards me.

I shut the door quickly and shoved in the ignition key. As he came up, I switched on the side lights.

He stopped, stared in at the car.

"Somethin' wrong, mister?" he shouted through the window.

He was a tall, red-faced chap with a bright red neck-cloth, and he was wearing a sack round his shoulders. I pretended not to hear, shouted something back at him. I started the engine.

"What's amiss up at the Manor?" he asked. "What's all the commotion?"

"Fire-engine," I shouted. "Just turned in there. Don't know what's wrong."

I put in the gear and swung the car off the grass verge. He stepped back in a hurry, as if he thought I might run him over.

I didn't know where this road led southwards, but I couldn't turn and repass the gatehouse. The sooner I got clear of this scene and changed my clothes the better.

After about half-a-mile I slowed down and turned my head, but the trees blocked the view. The clouds above the trees were tinged with yellow.

To be continued next week

"String? Ah, now there you've got me"

THE UNBELIEVER

Continued from page 20

down to drink from a spring? In daylight he danced and chanted.

Aching with rheumatism, he danced stiffly before the unseen, unnamed spirits, but he got no message from them, because he knew they did not exist.

The third day, he rested from pain, waiting for time to pass. Mahlon Mitchell, who would soon be Iron Head again and forever, held up his face to the sun's warmth and smiled.

Lieutenant Bradford was with the Indians who came to meet him. He told Bradford his decision. "I'm going to live with the Crows," he said.

"Really, Mr. Mitchell? The choice is up to you, of course."

"It sure is. Nobody can make me go back to the fort, can they?"

Of course the white men wanted him to go back, to make sure they'd get there, maybe to back up the lieutenant when he reported to the major. But nobody was going to push Iron Head around. Mahlon Mitchell, that white man, he could be pushed; he could be licked—and had been, for too long. But Iron Head was a Crow warrior.

"I wouldn't even try to make you go back," Bradford said. "But, of course, if you don't choose to go you'll never collect your pay. It seems to me that in your place I would want to come back to them with presents. I wouldn't want to come empty handed. Poor."

"What I've got is worth more than presents," Mitchell said. "What I can give them is good luck."

They rode in silence thereafter, but Mitchell was thinking hard. Come to them poor and they'd take him in, sure, with their arms outspread in friendship. But they might remember if the good luck ran out. Come to them rich, with trade goods to hand out like a lord, and they wouldn't forget that, either.

He was still thinking about that after the sweat bath, when the Quiet One was, with humble pride, helping him to dress for the council at which he would relate what his medicine had told him to do. She brought him paint and a precious scrap of mirror. She brought him bead ornaments and a necklace made of claws. She had a feather for his hair—the single eagle feather that only a proved warrior could wear.

He was wrapped in contentment. He was going back to the good life he remembered, and this time he would stay.

The Quiet One stood away, murmuring, and he turned to see Bradford at the lodge entrance.

The lieutenant asked courteously, "Will they object if I am present at the council?"

"They might," Mitchell said. "But I can talk 'em into it."

He was suddenly ashamed at being seen in this getup of nakedness and paint and beads and bits of fur and claws. When he was young, there had been nothing extraordinary about a white man wearing Indian trimmings. But in those days there had been no uniformed cavalry officers to observe in silence that might hide scorn.

He wanted to put the lieutenant in his place. He said, "Reckon you boys can find your way back to the fort and keep your hair besides?"

"I think so," Bradford answered. He added thoughtfully: "If it weren't for your reputation for valour, I might think you were staying here because you don't want to go back through Sioux country."

Rage flooded through Mitchell, but caution tempered it. He spoke evenly. "I'll let that pass, Lieutenant. You came to the Crows as a friend. We'll let you go that way."

When his son and several other warriors came to take him to the council lodge, Mitchell knew exactly what he was going to say.

Sitting in the council with the dark, stern-faced warriors ringing the fire, he sighed softly, letting himself sink into the warmth of old friendship, of being so much wanted. But before they could be sure of him, he would make them want him still more—and show the lieutenant something besides.

AFTER the long smoking and the slow, ceremonial oratory, he stood. "Iron Head will live with his brothers, the Crows," he said gravely. "He is coming back, and the Crows will be his people forever. His medicine told him this."

He said it again, in English, for Bradford, while the Indians waited.

The feathered heads moved, and firelight flashed on the fierce faces.

Yellow Calf said, "It is good that Iron Head comes back to his people. Now they will be strong again, because Iron Head is good medicine. But he says he is coming back. I would like to know what this means. He is here already."

"Iron Head goes first to the fort where the white soldiers are," Mitchell explained. "He has made a vow to go to the fort and tell the white chiefs that the Crows are their friends. Then he will come back with gifts."

That, too, he repeated in English for the lieutenant.

The response was more than he had hoped. The Indians pleaded. One after another, they gave reasons why Iron Head should stay with them now and not go back to the fort at all.

Maybe he had not understood what his medicine said, one man suggested, and the rest agreed, murmuring, that this might indeed be true. They were deeply disturbed, Mitchell saw.

Sadly, he assured them there could be no mistake. He must go first to the fort. Then he would stay with the Crows forever.

It seemed to him that he saw grief in the dark faces. I've got them in the palm of my hand! he told himself.

One thing they demanded: that he remain another day. There would be a feast for him. . . .

THE white men started back early in the morning after the feast was over. The procession that went with them honoured Iron Head, the good medicine.

Mitchell wished his insides felt better, so he could better enjoy this triumph. Yellow Calf went with them, and Bull Shoulders, and a dozen other men and even a few women to look after the baggage. His own woman, the Quiet One, was among them. She rode a spotted pony and led another that dragged a travois.

By noon he was feeling too sick to care what the rest of them were doing. The lieutenant commented, "Too much dog at the feast, perhaps?"

"I've ate dog before," Mitchell grunted. "Dog meat's all right."

He almost collapsed when he dismounted. When he tried to sleep, the Quiet One sat beside him. He woke up, moaning, to feel her hand comforting his wet forehead.

In the morning he was no better.

"We'll hurry up to the fort," Bradford said.

Mitchell did not want to hurry anywhere. He was racked with stomach cramps. He could not remember how many days' travel they must be from the fort.

"I'll send a man on ahead for the doctor," Bradford promised, "when we get through Sioux country."

Mitchell, writhing, did not answer.

That day he did not ride. They tied him on a travois, to be pulled behind the spotted pony.

He revived enough to tell the lieutenant, "This is how — they brought me in—after a fight with Blackfeet."

I lived through that, he remembered, as he swayed into black sickness.

But he remembered something else: I never was as sick as this before. I could die this time!

Sometimes the blackness divided like a curtain, and behind it was Mitchell drowning in a flood of pain. He had glimpses of faces when the curtain parted: Bradford leaning over him, looking distressed, asking some question he could not answer; Sergeant O'Hara, bringing water he could not drink; the Quiet One, laying her hand on his forehead.

That shocked him to consciousness. She had so far forgotten her place that, before them all, she showed her possession of Iron Head.

He began to know a kind of fear he had never felt before. He fought against panic. But he was too sick to push the Quiet One away.

He saw the face of his Indian son, Bull Shoulders, stern and watchful.

The lieutenant again, grim with worry.

"Stop the horse!" Mitchell gasped.

He had to wait for something. There was no use trying to keep ahead of it. Let it come now and end the agony.

He saw the dark face of his friend, Yellow Calf. The chief looked down at him with an expression he had never before seen on that dark, seamed face.

In a sweep of horror, Iron Head understood that he did not hold the Crows in the palm of his hand. For what he saw in that savage face was—compassion.

The feast—that's when they poisoned me! he realized.

He cried out in English, "Why? Why?"

Yellow Calf answered in the Crow tongue, "We are sorry to do this thing. But Iron Head is good medicine for my people. Now he will never go away from his brothers who need him. . . ."

The white soldiers rode on fast, without their escort, after crossing a river.

On the bank, the Quiet One, with bleeding gashes on her arms, was at work with another squaw, making a platform in a tree to receive the body of Iron Head, so that the good medicine could be kept safely forever in the country of the Crows. THE END

TAKE IT FROM ME

Continued from page 17

intensively in glider towing and para-troop dropping.

Glider towing was not greatly to my liking. The take-off was complicated by the erratic behaviour of the cumbersome craft in tow. Speed was considerably reduced, and the rate of climb was laboriously slow. It was sheer hard work wrestling with the controls, especially on a bumpy day.

Early in 1944, I was promoted to flight lieutenant. I was now twenty-four and had a whacking great moustache. One day, our flight commander, Major Joubert, a thin, wiry, middle-aged South African, sent for me. "It has been decided," he said, "to send three or four Dakotas each night across Occupied France to drop leaflets on certain towns. I shall go on the first raid. How would you like to go with me, Jim, as my second pilot?"

"Not on your life, sir," I said to Joubie, for I knew him well enough to pull his leg a bit. "But I'd like to be the next to go in my own aircraft, if you don't mind."

"All right, Jim, you can go tomorrow," he promised.

Over Enemy Territory

We took off at midnight, and set course for our target, which was Tours, nearly two hundred miles beyond the French coast. This was my first flight over enemy-occupied territory and I was surprised at my own calmness. It was a very dark night and that, I thought, was all to the good. As we crossed the English coast, I switched off all my lights. I climbed and presently, at ten thousand feet, I noticed a thin blanket of cloud developing beneath the aircraft. This meant we were not able to see the French coast when we reached it.

With the automatic pilot doing the work, I sat back in a comfortable reverie as we headed slowly towards our target. When we were within three-quarters of an hour of our estimated time of arrival, I called back to Harry Green. "Where are we?" I asked.

"I don't know," Harry said.

"What the hell do you mean, 'I don't know'?" I yelled.

He explained. "I've been counting on Gee," he said. Gee was a new and rather remarkable radar installation, which, over England, was of great assistance to a navigator. "The trouble is that as soon as we crossed the Channel the Germans jammed it. I just don't know where we are."

I cursed him roundly. "Where were we when you last had a fix?" I asked.

They Flew On Blind

He examined his chart. "About forty miles off track," he confessed. We were thoroughly lost. In my inexperience, I had no idea what to do now. I thought about it and decided to go on blindly and drop our leaflets at the hour of our estimated arrival. We droned on through the black, forbidding night. Now and then, far down below, I saw a single pin-point of light. Then, somewhere near the time, I was relieved to see a cluster of dim lights below. This must be the town, I thought, without much confidence, and circled over the lights.

"Drop the leaflets," I ordered. As soon as they had all gone, I set the Dakota's nose northward. Beside me, in the second pilot's seat, F/Lt. "Daddy" Wallis, who was substituting for MacNeill while the latter was taking a course, was sound asleep, quite unaware of our difficulties. I saw no reason to awaken him.

We were under orders not, in any circumstances, to use our wireless. All I could do, I decided, was fly north until I saw something I recognized. The hours passed and there was still no sign of the Channel or of England. I began to worry.

Harry Green, thoroughly ashamed and thoroughly lost, sat in a daze at his desk. I kept glancing at my dwindling petrol gauges. I noticed a light, dead ahead—probably a badly blacked-out house—and was amazed at the terrible slowness at which we seemed to approach it.

Then I realized we must be running into a pretty strong head wind. I felt sure, now, that we had been blown far to the south of our target. I thought: what if dawn comes and we are still sitting here? We'll be over enemy-occupied France and easy meat for German fighters.

Lights Were A Trap

Once I saw flak ahead, where an air raid was in progress, and made a detour round the danger area. At about five in the morning we came to a large airfield, brightly lit. Over it was a cone of searchlights, a much-used method of homing aircraft in England. Still at ten thousand feet, I circled the runway, and called on the wireless for help and information.

There was no reply. Then I remembered that the Germans had been known to use this device as a trap. I flew into the approaching dawn. I was afraid and trying not to admit it to myself.

At half past five, when it was beginning to get light enough to tell whether we were over land or sea, Billy Randall came forward. "Let me ask for a fix," he begged. I had to agree. A minute later he came back with — to my tremendous relief — a position in mid-Channel.

At dawn I could just make out the English coast at Southampton, and dived at maximum speed straight to the aerodrome at Down Ampney. As we roared over the peaceful field and beat up the flying control tower at nought feet, S/Ldr. Bridgewood, who had kept a lonely, troubled vigil for us, loosed off a rocket in jubilation.

At de-briefing, we soon worked out the cause of all the trouble. The meteorological experts had forecast a southerly wind, when, in fact, it had been a northerly. Harry Green had failed to notice this in his navigation and, as a consequence, we were whisked down almost to the Pyrenees by a 50-m.p.h. tail wind. When we turned, of course, this became a head wind and reduced our speed accordingly. Checking back on all our courses, Bridgewood reckoned that I must have spoken on the radio to a large German airfield near Cherbourg.

At the beginning of June, all aircraft were recalled to Down Ampney and grounded in preparation for D-Day. Large pots of black and white paint were brought out from secret stores and we were all instructed to paint wide identification stripes on the under-bellies of our aircraft. The station seethed with preparations.

Somewhat melodramatically, I set my own house in order and wrote a letter "to be opened only in the event of my death." I suppose hundreds of thousands of similar letters were being written at the same time.

All leave was stopped and the camp was sealed. The habitual good-natured rowdyism was a little subdued at the briefing, when it was learned that we were to make a night glider lift across the Channel, some hours before the invasion. I was sure, somehow, that I would not survive this operation.

Then came a terrible anti-climax. The invasion was postponed for twenty-four hours. Everybody hurried to the mess for a quietly brooding celebration.

Next evening it was on. The aircraft and gliders had been on the runway long before this, waiting for the mass take-off. There were so many of them that virtually a quarter of the valuable runway space was used up before we even opened the throttle. Added to this, the wind had changed during the postponement and it was now very problematical whether we were going to be able to drag the gliders off the ground in the runway length that was left.

The Dusk Armada

Good lucks were exchanged all round and we climbed in to warm up the engines as dusk began to fall. W/Cdr. Booth was first off the ground and we watched in breathless anxiety as he reached the end of the runway and staggered a few feet into the air, over the hedge towards the church tower of Cricklade. One by one they went away; my turn came about sixth.

My faithful aeroplane, KG 444, which I had dubbed "The Pie-eyed Piper of Barnes," strained at the rope. I whacked the throttles open and we gathered momentum. The wretched aeroplane, of course, chose this trip of all trips to develop slight engine trouble during take-off, and I anxiously watched the dials as the revs on the port engine surged back and forth. At the end of the runway we were still on the ground and barely had enough speed to call ourselves airborne, but I called "Wheels up!" and we, in turn, staggered over the hedge.

I suppose I have taken aircraft with and without gliders off the ground hundreds of times, but I remember this take-off more vividly than any other. A slight hill was between us and the village, and we passed over this so low that two small boys in the middle of a field picked up stones to throw at us. I instinctively ducked, only to check myself and laugh at this foolish nervousness. We passed by Cricklade church just about on a level with the red light on its spire, and climbed up to our operational height.

Tense With Excitement

Some of us were to drop our gliders a few miles east of the invasion bridgehead a few hours before the seaborne landings. We crossed the coast at Worthing. I was tense with excitement and put the automatic pilot in for a moment to let my hands have a good tremble on their own.

Nearing the enemy coast, we peered anxiously through the darkness for our landfall, which had been so finely calculated that we were to cross over a particular house. From here we were to run into the field where the gliders were to come down, two miles inland.

Everything had been calculated to the last hair, but someone had overlooked an important item. Bomber Command had just finished dropping thousand-pounders on a gun emplacement near our target, and the air was full of smoke and dust, obscuring our vision. I missed my house and soon realized I had overshot the field.

I had been instructed to fly on if this happened, and on no account to turn back into the following stream of paratroop-dropping aircraft. I knew, however, that I hadn't enough petrol to tow my glider all the way back to England. What was I to do? I could not release him now and let him land so far from his objective. I turned about, found the coast again, and flew up and down in search of the house which was our landmark.

I had come down to eight hundred feet when, suddenly, with a series of unpleasant explosions, we were caught in a burst of fire from a heavy machine-gun. I threw Treble 4 into a steep turn. Miraculously, my glider pilot hung on. A few moments later I saw what I thought was our target field. "Here we are," I said over the inter-com to the glider pilot. "Goodbye and good luck."

I felt the sudden lurch as he released himself. Then I opened the throttles, dropped the rope and climbed up into the clouds. At about seven thousand feet, we shot out of the cloud into brilliant moonlight and found ourselves one of a huge mass of aircraft dotted about over the sky. Going round Le Havre, we came batting at full bore back across the Channel towards base.

An Emergency Landing

My extra circuit with the glider had diminished my supply of petrol more than was expected, and when I neared the aerodrome the fuel gauges were looking ominously low. I was anxious to obtain an emergency priority landing and, according to pre-arranged briefing, I flashed my landing light on and off and received a welcome green light from the tower.

Slipping the landing-gear lever into the down position, I was rather alarmed to find the hydraulic pressure did not come up to the minimum necessary. When I called for flaps and they would not go down either, I knew that something had gone wrong. I quickly turned on the emergency tap of hydraulic oil. So we came into land with "Tiger" Hunter, my new second pilot, frantically pumping to keep the pressure up, and all kinds of

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IN JOHN BULL NEXT WEEK

"It's refreshing, Tilson, to have a member of the board who has the courage to stand up and disagree with me. Goodbye and good luck!"

panic thoughts rushing through my head.

We touched down, and mercifully the wheels stayed put. But now there were no brakes, so, cutting the engines off, I steered off the runway and came to a shaky, slithering standstill facing the way we had just come. I jumped out of my seat and raced to the door of the aircraft. As I reached the ground, I was met by our squadron M.O. "What's up, Jimmy?" he said, glancing at my ashen face.

Just Missed Petrol Tank

"No brakes," I replied, and then we started an inspection of the aircraft with torches. We soon found the cause. Several explosive bullets had struck the aircraft, but none, fortunately, in a completely lethal spot. One tiny piece of shrapnel had severed the hydraulic line and we had lost most of the oil. I found myself trembling with fright and relief at getting down in one piece—the more so when I realized that one of the bullets had exploded a mere eighteen inches from the port petrol tank.

Major Joubert had returned from his mission unscathed. He was not happy about it. "You have all the luck, Jimmy," he complained. "What a beautiful hole that is in your port wing!"

Next day we were airborne again, with an all-out, large-scale glider lift. This was the biggest airborne operation in air force history, and every type of aircraft that could possibly tow a glider had been pressed into service. With their varying speeds, they presented a jostling mass all over the evening sky, and I sat in amazement, trying to see the beginning or the end of this mighty aerial armada. Above, below and all around us swarmed clutches of busy fighters protecting us. There were so many of them that I do not think the Germans even thought of making an attack.

As we got across the Channel, I was treated to a brief grandstand view of the entire invasion beach-head. We passed over the vast naval concentrations, went on a very short distance inland up the River Orne, and cast off our gliders.

Until then, I had never seen anything that even pretended to be a warlike demonstration. As we went in I was gazing over the countryside and was rather shaken to see a house go up suddenly in a great sheet of flame. I suppose this was a direct hit from one of the battleships.

With fighters zooming and straffing all round the dropping zone, the gliders went down in a seemingly endless stream. We dropped our ropes, turned hard to port and, diving swiftly to sea level, flew back across the Channel.

As we skimmed along, I saw the hull of a Dakota sticking out of the water and thought I had better veer over and see if there was anything that could be done. There were many aircraft milling round the wreck and I joined the circus for a few minutes to see the pilot get into his dinghy and await rescue. An air-sea rescue launch was at hand and the happy pilot was making unmistakable gestures to us.

At Down Ampney, most of us exchanged congratulations at coming through unscathed. Joubie, however, was dancing with joy. He had deliberately strayed farther inland than was entirely necessary and had picked up a large hole in his wing. "It's bigger than Jimmy's," he chortled.

One day in September, all aircraft were recalled to Down Ampney to be repaired and put in their best running order. I walked out on to the field to Treble 4 and tapped a flight sergeant on the shoulder. "I see you're putting in long-range tanks," I remarked. "Why is that?"

"Don't ask me, sir," he grumbled. "I suppose you must be going a long way." The same thing was being done to the other Dakotas, and rumours began to buzz. There was talk of a paratroop drop on Norway; but it soon became known that the glider squadrons were being stood-to as well.

Take Off For Arnhem

A day or two later, we were called in for briefing. As I walked into the room I saw the huge wall map with a route marked right across to Holland. I realized then that if we were to take our heavy gliders all the way from Down Ampney to Arnhem, we should need that extra fuel—every drop of it.

Once more the aircraft and gliders were massed on the runway, and once more we took off in turn and climbed in a wide sweep to starboard to set course for the east coast. In my eagerness to catch up with the glider ahead, with whom I was to fly in formation, I turned a little too steeply. Suddenly Treble 4 skidded and lurched about and I realized that my glider pilot was in trouble. "What's up?" I shouted through the intercom.

"I think we've got the rope caught round the nose wheel," was the reply.

This was a new situation for me and I did not know how to cope with it. "Can you manage?" I asked the glider pilot. He laughed. "It's difficult, but I think we'll get there all right."

I pictured him with his co-pilot, struggling with the controls for four long hours, and admired his guts.

Then Billy Randall came to the

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rescue with a brilliant suggestion. "I know what, skipper," he said. "Why don't you just slacken speed for a second—then the rope will sag and come away from their nose wheel."

It sounded as though it might work. I cut the throttles momentarily and watched our airspeed drop. Billy gave me a running commentary. "It's fine—it's come away all right." The danger now was that in taking up the strain again, I would break the rope. Gingerly I eased the throttles forward and waited in an agony of suspense for the jerk that would mean the rope had snapped.

At last Bill's voice came over the intercom again. "It's all right, skipper! The rope's tight and the boys look quite happy."

Like Giant Moths

We all settled down to the long drag across the North Sea. I had no time to marvel at the multitude of tugs and gliders involved in this colossal air-lift to Arnhem, for I had my work cut out in keeping clear of the slipstreams of other aircraft.

As the coast of Holland loomed up out of the haze, my heart beat a little faster, but there was no cause for alarm. I saw only a few bursts of flak and no enemy fighters before we reached our dropping zone near Arnhem.

As we approached, it was not difficult to spot the landing field. It was already dotted with gliders, and the very air above it was filled with the silent, motorless craft, dropping like a swarm of giant moths. "Here we are. Good luck," I said to the pilot of the glider I was towing, and off he went. It looked so easy and so safe.

We got back to Down Ampney without incident and the next day repeated the operation with as little trouble. I was beginning to take it in my stride. There seemed to be little danger, in spite of our caterpillar slowness and complete lack of armament.

On the third day, Treble 4 had an overhaul. Some of the other boys came back with disquieting reports of increased enemy flak in the dropping area, but I dismissed them as exaggerations. Things had been so quiet when I had been over that I found it hard to believe the Germans had been able to pull themselves together and hit back.

On the fourth day, I had to take part in a supply drop and we had a hectic couple of minutes as the flak came up in a dangerous surge. I saw a Dakota near me burst into flames and crash, but we got back to base safely.

As I stepped out of the aircraft, Joubie greeted me. "Somebody in the flight has to go up again tomorrow, Jim. How would you like to do it?"

"I don't mind," I replied. Next morning I found Treble 4 loaded with ammunition. On the grass beside her were the four soldiers who were to fly with me to drop the load. I ordered them in and, with a wave to the ground-crew boys, swung out on to the runway and taxied out for the take-off.

Visibility over Holland was bad, but soon, by the bursts of flak in the air ahead of us, I could tell that the first aircraft in the stream had arrived over the dropping zone. By this time, our troops had been hemmed into a small area and were surrounded by a tight circle of German artillery. As we approached, the Germans elevated their barrels and blazed away at us.

Soon it was our turn to run the gauntlet across this ring of fire—the straight, unswerving run, only eight hundred feet above the ground with airspeed reduced to 110 miles per hour. Down we went, with a little flap on to reduce speed. Just as I crossed the Neder Rijn River, I saw a yellow Very light coming up from the ground, slightly to the left. I swung Treble 4 over and made the run over the spot. I thought that perhaps some of our troops were waiting there for the ammunition they so desperately needed.

I flicked a switch and, back in the fuselage, the green light went on. The dispatchers began to push the panniers out and I could feel the impact through the control column as they crumbled into the slipstream.

Broke Up In Mid-air

A Dakota swerved across my path. Suddenly, a container floating down from an aircraft above, struck off its tail unit, and I saw the Dakota dive headlong into the earth. Unnerved, I managed to hold my course until all our stuff was out. Then, with a surging thrill of relief, I opened the throttles and pulled up and away.

At what I thought was a safe height, I was looking back and down to see where the panniers were landing when we were caught in a brief burst of small arms fire. I instinctively went into evasive action and left the area as quickly as possible. I was now slightly separated from the other aircraft in my bunch, but at least we were out of danger from ground fire.

At ten thousand feet I slackened speed and, made confident by the lack of interference on previous days, slipped the automatic pilot in. Undoing my straps, I called out to Billy Randall for some sandwiches and my vacuum flask. By this time we were south of Nijmegen. I wiped the sweat from my brow. That burst of ground fire had been uncomfortably close.

I had one leg out of my seat and was just going back to hurry Bill up with the sandwiches, when the aircraft was rocked by a sickening series of explosions. Flak, I thought, as I whipped the automatic pilot out.

Then I glanced out to the left and saw a head-on view of a fighter coming towards us. Black exhaust smoke was pouring out behind it. Suddenly it dawned on me—a *Focke-Wulf*!

"Fighters!" I shouted hoarsely, and heaved back on the stick. At the same time I kicked on full left rudder to avoid the stream of tracer bullets which I could now see cutting the air just ahead of Treble 4. Panic-stricken, for this was the first time I had seen a German fighter, I thought: this can't be happening to me. But I knew we had no guns to defend ourselves and that we would be easy meat if I didn't do something quickly.

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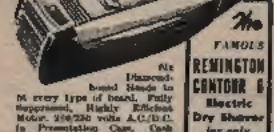

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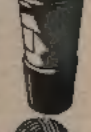

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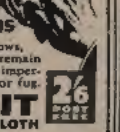

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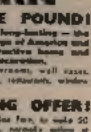

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1/- Send for Samples (refundable)

For fitted carpets, runners, surrounds, squares, shipmats, etc.

Width	Grade 1	Grade 2
18in.	9/11	7/-
27in.	14/11	9/11
36in.	19/11	13/11
54in.	29/6	19/11
per yd. carriage free.		

Modern hair and wool felted carpeting. Soft and luxurious to the feet, pleasing to the eye, it will last and wear well. Resilient, non-slip, sprayed rubber base, which is moth and damp resisting. Needs no stitching and no underfelt. Will not fray.

Grade 1, Granted GOOD HOUSEKEEPING SEAL OF GUARANTEE

COLOURS: Green, Beige, Brown, Red, Blue, Rust, Rose Pink, Grey. Also 3 delightful new shades: Mottle Green, Mottle Blue, Mottle Cherry.

PINDI STORES LTD. (Dept. J.B.10), 373 & 375 Uxbridge Road, Acton W.3 or 58 Ludgate Hill, London, E.C.4.

BRAND NEW Wincyette OFFICERS PYJAMAS

Absolutely Brand New but straight from the Government bales and slightly creased. You can buy these warm, smart officers' pyjamas for 10/11 only. Post, etc., 9d. Popular striped Wincyette material which lasts for years. Remember prices are soaring, so DO NOT miss this remarkable offer. State Chest measurement. 3 Pairs for 32/6 Post Free. FREE LISTS of other clothing.

HEADQUARTERS & GENERAL SUPPLIES Ltd. (Dept. J.B.25), 194-200 Coldharbour Lane, Loughborough Junc., London, S.E.5. Open all Sat.

RESTORE ENERGY and DEFEAT AGE
with the famous
VITABRACE

Physical shortness, a slender waistline and the appearance of youthfulness are essential to success in social and business life. Made from fine elastic fabric with no buckles or hooks.

All sizes up to 44in. hips 18/11 post free

3 for 35/-. Super and extra-Super qualities available. Please state hip measurement (Waist 9 ins.). Money refunded if not approved.

BEASLEY'S BELT Dept. B.V.B.
NEWNHAM, GLOS. Catalogue Free

about a thousand feet below us and I dived down towards it, but just as this haven seemed within reach, we were raked from astern. The next few minutes were the most terrible of my life, for the cloud offered only partial cover and, it seemed, the fighter anticipated our appearance in every break in it.

Billy Randall gave me a running commentary over the intercom. "He's coming in from right behind," he said. "Turn. . . . It doesn't matter which way you turn. He's coming in again. . . . He's going right past us. . . ." I looked out of the window and saw him streak past—sea-green and wicked-looking, with a black cross on the fuselage; straight out of a page in our aircraft recognition books.

I turned this way and that, desperately trying to escape from him. In and out of that cloud I went until I had lost all sense of direction and my instruments were spinning crazily.

Soldiers Were Hit

The Focke-Wulf attacked us no fewer than six times, and each time he hit us somewhere. The wings of Treble 4 were so full of holes I dared not look at them, and the smell from the cannon shells that had exploded inside the fuselage was nauseating. At last, in the sixth attack, we were hit in the wings again and I lost aileron control. I knew that we might go into a spin at any moment and by now had lost height down to seven thousand feet.

"Bale out!" I yelled. My new second pilot, F/Sgt. Nobby Clarke, was gone in a flash. I did my best to hold her level for a few moments to give all the others a chance to get out. Turning round to reach for my own parachute, I was horrified to see a huddle of the army chaps sitting on the floor of the cabin. "Why the hell don't you get out?" I shrieked.

"We can't," one of them said. "We've all been hit."

I was in a terrible quandary, flying an all but uncontrollable aircraft with four wounded men on board, no crew, and a German fighter lurking malignantly above for another attack. Clearly I *had* to remain in the aircraft, but which way to turn? How to get her down?

Suddenly my problem was answered for me. With a sickening roar, both my props went into fully fine pitch and the engines ran away. This meant it could only be a matter of time before they would seize up and explode. There was nothing for it but to cut the throttles and stuff the nose down towards the earth.

Enveloped In Flames

We hurtled down to within a hundred feet of the ground, and through the increased speed I managed to regain partial aileron control. Holding the nose up to reduce speed for the crash, I opened the escape hatch in the roof over my head and only then realized that we were on fire. The flames, which had spread from the starboard engine to the cabin, were sucked forward by the draught and enveloped me.

To avoid the full force of the heat, I stuck my head out of the escape hatch into the slipstream. In this awkward position, standing up with my head stuck through the roof and my face averted because of the rush of air, I could just reach the top of the stick and somehow managed to control our final plunge into the ground. We had lost height so rapidly that I had no chance to pick a place to land, and just let her go down straight ahead.

Then, with a rending crash, Treble 4 was slicing into trees and branches as we careered through a young forest. I remember looking along the port wing and actually seeing the trees as they struck it.

NEXT WEEK: Jimmy describes how he survived the crash and evaded capture

FROM MY FAMILY ALBUM

The photograph on page 25 is of Gracie Fields as a child.

MEDITERRANEAN HOLIDAY for YOU?

WHO'S next for a *Bullets* fortune *plus* a 14-day sunshine cruise to the Mediterranean? Since the war, three JOHN BULL readers (each with a companion) have enjoyed such holiday cruises won in *Bullets*. Our pictures show last year's winner, Mr. J. E. Hurley ("Pyrcot," North Street, Williton, Taunton), with his wife; you see them aboard their cruise ship (right) and (below) sightseeing in Madeira.

A coupon awaits you below—and your first *Bullet*, notice, is free. Make that coupon your ticket for a trip to the bank with a £600 cheque plus a cruise to the Mediterranean!

"BULLETS" 1st PRIZE for 2, 3 or 4 WORDS

£600 AND SUNSHINE CRUISE

OR LUMP SUM OF **£750**

1,569 OTHER PRIZES
£50, £25, £10, £9, £8, £7, £6, 2 of £5, 10 of £2.10s.
50 "Bullets" Season Tickets
1,500 New "Use-as-you-choose" Awards

FINE FOWL BONUSES

A fine roasting fowl accompanies each of the 20 chief prizes won with *Bullet* which was one of four or more on single coupon or plain-paper entry sheet.

HOW TO WIN

To make a *Bullet*, add simply TWO, THREE or FOUR words of apt and original comment to any of the *Examples* below. To use an incomplete *Example*, first complete it with any one word in place of dotted line—then make your *Bullet* as usual.

Add 2, 3 or 4 Words to any of these "EXAMPLES"

Man, The Blunderer
History's Tapestry
Long Live Freedom And
Visitor Tito
Promise Of Spring
Off The Ration
Better For Everybody
Hubby's Ship
Screened
A Farce
On All Sides
Glamour Of The Orient
Tantalizing
It's Tea-time, So
Unforgivable Sin
Bubbling Over
Ought To Be Scrapped
Human Dynamo
Girl He Loves
With A Sad Little Smile

Incomplete "Examples" —see instructions

In The Land Of.....
While We.....
Paradise For.....
If Auntie Had A.....
One Long.....
Not So.....As It Looks

"Bullets" Winners 1,867

FIRST PRIZE, £750 plus Three Wishes and Weekend: S. W. Marsh, 89 Alice Street, South Shields:

One Kick After Another Of *Both* Sorts—Life!

£50: W. S. Gale, 33 Whitworth Road, Swindon, Wilts: OUT OF THE DARKNESS—*Peace* "FLOWER" STRUGGLING, TOO.

£25: W. Graham, 7 Ruberslaw Rd., Burnfoot, Hawick: WISHFUL THINKING—"JOE'S SOFTENING!"—"JOHN'S SOFT!"

OTHER AWARDS. £15: W. Cave, 25 Broughton Avenue, Leeds, 9: WORLD WE'RE MAKING—TRACKS FOR—TRACKLESS WASTE? £10: C. Reed, 186 Droop Street, Queens Park, London, W.10: UNDERNEATH THE BEDSTEAD—AUNTIE *Drives, Often* MAN! £5: J. T. Clements, 73 Kilmartin Avenue, Norbury, London, S.W.16.: UNDERNEATH THE RISING—COSTS, THERE'S SLACKER'S SHOULDER! £5: D. H. Colclough, 49 Charminster Road, Bournemouth, Hants: ONE KOREA AFTER ANOTHER—BUT FOR *One* KOREA. £5: A. T. Cross, 1 Hilltop Avenue, Whitefield, Nr. Manchester: ONE BRAND AFTER ANOTHER—THEN DAD'S *Car* BLOTTO? £5 F. G. Nancarrow, "St. Elmo" Cottage, Gover Valley, St. Austell, Cwll: IT'S CORONATION YEAR, SO—COVER "GUMTREE" WITH BUNTING! £5: W. Sharrock, 102 Victoria Street, Newtown, Wigan: OUT OF DARKNESS—HIS "FRIGHTENED CHILDREN," EVENTUALLY? (All prizes have been posted.)

CASH AND FOOD PRIZES FOR XWORDS!

This Way To Win

FIRST complete Square in INK, giving your Answers to Clues below. Then, if you wish to enter *one* extra Answer to any *one*, *two* or *three* Clues, give each such word in full in "Extra Answer" Form below Crossword Square.

Across Clues — XWORD 824

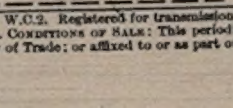
1. A well-constructed story sometimes contains quite a number of them
3. A man in the wars likes to think his wife's a stout ally at his
5. Powerful one can make a strong man feel helpless
6. It's time for guest to go when one of weariness escapes hostess
8. Sometimes leads a person astray
13. Face sometimes conveys impression of
14. It's doubtful if we've got even a rough idea of damage done by

Down Clues

1. It's rather silly to get heated about
2. Leader of gang commonly has more than any other member
4. They are as likely to be found in canteen as anywhere else
7. There are times when wild this conveys warning of trouble coming
9. There's a kind of suit particularly associated with this
10. This may not be what it appears to be
11. It may give dear old lady confidence on dark night when way is lonely
12. It's not at all easy to get some men to

£100 FIRST PRIZE

AWARDS VALUE £25 among 1st Runners-up and up to **50** ROASTING FOWLS



—one with each Runner-up Award value 10s. or over

Up to 500 "SIGNPOST" PRIZES —one for each 2nd Runner-up

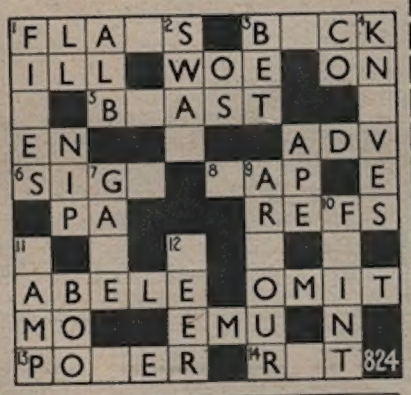
XWORD 819 RESULT

WINNING WORDS. ACROSS: 1, Clasp. 3, Mend. 6, Oven. 8, Set. 11, Starred. 13, Crises. 14, Hat. DOWN: 1, Change. 2, Store. 4, Nil or Nix. 5, Reek. 7, Stride. 9, Creek. 10, Fee. 12, Trio.

TWO £100 SHARERS: Mrs. R. Simons, 12 Castle Crescent, Reading; A. Spink, 34 Cornwall Road, Bradford.

Awards value £25 for 1st Runners-up shared by seven entrants, each of whom receives "Johnny-Basket" in addition. Useful "Signpost" Prizes awarded to 2nd Runners-up.

£100 and 5 lb. FOWL Prizes for this XWORD



In adjudication, all Extra Answers will be read in combination with each other and with all Answers in your Square. Thus your completed Square with one extra Answer to *one* Clue will represent *two* full Squares (Entry-fee 6d.). Square with one extra Answer to *two* Clues will represent *four* full Squares (Entry-fee 1s.) and Square with one extra Answer to *three* Clues will represent *eight* full Squares (Entry-fee 2s.).

Single Square with 6d. P.O. or stamps covers dispatch to you of *Crossword Gazette* dated February 28.

Winner—sender of most meritorious set of Answers received—decided by Adjudication Committee on basis of aptness and accuracy. Ties divide. Entrants limited to one prize per Contest and to entry requiring not more than 4s. entry-fee. Signature indicates agreement to Rules.

CLUE	EXTRA ANSWER	Total Fee
No.		6d.
No.		1s.
No.		2s.

(Total fee shown includes entry on Square)

Puzzle and form strictly copyright **824** Closing Postmark MON., FEB. 16

I enclose P.O. value ..... No. .....

Signed .....

Address .....

.....

POST ENTRY

"Bullets" 1,872 (or Xword 824), "John Bull," Long Acre, London, W.C.2 (Comp.)

YOUR FIRST "BULLET" FREE THIS WEEK ONLY

RULES 1. First Prize for best *Bullet* received. Others in order of merit; the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.

2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent Adjudicators.

3. As entry-fee enclose P.O. or stamps as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are full rate. If using P.O. make payable to JOHN BULL, cross / & Co. /, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated. Forces half-rate for *Bullets* and Crosswords for entry-fees not exceeding 2s. if coupons personally completed and Service rank indicated.

4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that results of this week's Contests (in *Bulletin* and *Gazette*, dated March 7 and in JOHN BULL dated March 14), also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

(See "Daily Herald" on Saturday, February 28, for early news of *Bullets* No. 1,872 result.)

EXAMPLE ..... **FREE**

BULLET .....

EX. ..... **6d.**

B. .....

EX. ..... **6d.**

B. .....

EX. ..... **6d.**

B. .....

EX. ..... **6d.**

B. .....

I agree to Rules and enclose P.O. value..... No.....

Signed.....

Address.....

.....

.....

1,872 Closing Postmark MON., FEB. 16

MAY WE SEND YOU THIS GUIDE TO SUCCESS? For practical help with *Bullets* and Crosswords, stick 2½d. stamp on right—this brings you *Bulletin* and *Gazette* dated February 28. **685**

STICK **2½d.** STAMP here for "*Bulletin*"

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Dere Mummy

Plese May We Have a Noahs Ark party

with Lots of LuvLY Bird's custard

NOAH'S ARK TRIFLE

for 8 delighted children

1 Sponge Cake
1 Bird's Jelly-de-Luxe
1 oz. Chopped Nuts
1 pt. Bird's Custard

Break up sponge cake and mix with the chopped nuts. Make up jelly and when partly cool pour over sponge. Leave to set. Make up Bird's Custard, see how smooth it is and taste its delicate flavour. Spoon cooled custard gently over jelly and leave to set.

Then — just before serving — decorate top with jelly or chocolate animals and a Noah's Ark made from sponge cake and marzipan (or you can use a small, plastic house).

The glowing, golden look of Bird's Custard and its wonderful taste make this trifle the pride of the party.

Noah made from fruit and nuts

Here's a new way of serving fresh fruit and Bird's Custard. Fill shallow fruit dishes or pretty saucers with Bird's Custard. You need *Bird's* because it has that specially rich, smooth flavour that goes so well with fruit.

When custard is set, arrange fruit on top to look like people. Apple, orange and banana slices, cherries, blanched almonds dipped in melted chocolate, angelica, look and taste delicious.

Bird's Custard comes in big, family-size tins as well as 1-pint and 6-pint packets.

ALWAYS BETTER WITH BIRD'S CUSTARD